Routledge Studies in the Qur'an

QUR'AN TRANSLATION IN INDONESIA

SCRIPTURAL POLITICS IN A MULTILINGUAL STATE

Edited by
Johanna Pink

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Qur'an Translation in Indonesia

This book provides a comprehensive survey of Qurʾan translation in Indonesia – the most populous Muslim-majority country in the world with a highly diverse, multilingual society.

Delving into the linguistic and political dimensions of this field, the contributors – many of whom are Indonesian scholars – employ a wide range of historical, socio-cultural, linguistic and exegetical approaches to offer fresh insights. In their contributions, the negotiation of authority between state and non-state actors is shown to be a constant theme, from the pre-print era through to the colonial and postcolonial periods. Religious organizations, traditional institutions of scholarship and Wahhabi-Salafi groups struggle over the meaning of the Qurʾan while the Ministry of Religious Affairs publishes its own Qurʾan translations into many of the country's languages. The contributors also explore the influential role of the Ahmadiyya movement in shaping Qurʾan translation in Indonesia. Moreover, they examine the specific challenges that translators face when rendering the Qurʾan in languages with structures, histories and cultural contexts that are vastly different from Arabic.

Opening up the work of Indonesian scholars to a wider audience, this book will appeal to anyone interested in Qurʾanic studies and Islam in the Southeast Asia region.

Johanna Pink is Professor of Islamic Studies at the University of Freiburg, Germany. Her main fields of interest are the modern transregional history of *tafsīr* and Qurʾan translations. She is the Principal Investigator of "GloQur – The Global Qur'an" and general editor of the *Encyclopaedia of the Qurʾān Online*.

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Qur'an Translation in Indonesia

Scriptural Politics in a Multilingual State

Edited by Johanna Pink

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This book has been five years in the making, and I owe a huge debt of gratitude to the authors for their patience.

I had been thinking about the intriguing field of Qurʾan translation in Indonesia for a long time. There is probably no country in which the government takes a more active role in Qurʾan translation, and there are also few countries with a greater wealth of languages. Despite this, the translation activities of Indonesian Muslim individuals and institutions receive very little attention in the field of Islamic studies outside Indonesia.

A concrete opportunity to assemble a group of like-minded scholars and produce an edited volume that would shed light on the issue finally arose at a conference on Qurʾan translation in Indonesia that took place in Yogyakarta in July 2018. The conference was part of a project called "A Nation State as an Actor in the Religious Field: The Indonesian Ministry of Religion (Kementerian Agama) and the Quest for Interpretive Authority over the Qurʾan", funded by the German Research Foundation, to whom I am extremely grateful for sponsoring this project, including the conference. The event was co-organized by the School of Postgraduate Studies (Pascasarjana) of the University Islam Negeri Sunan Kalijaga in Yogyakarta, for whose support I am immensely thankful. I owe special thanks in this regard to Moch. Nur Ichwan and Munirul Ikhwan, lecturers at Pascasarjana, distinguished scholars and esteemed colleagues. The lion's share of the work of organizing, coordinating and preparing the program, however, was done by Fadhli Lukman, my doctoral student and colleague between 2016 and 2019, whose help and support have been invaluable throughout the planning of the conference and the preparation of this volume. Fadhli, please accept my deepest and heartfelt gratitude!

After the conference, it has taken another four years for this book to take shape. Progress was hampered by my own preoccupation with other commitments, by a global pandemic that had many of the contributors struggling and by the numerous delays and difficulties that all editors of collaborative books are familiar with. It would have taken even longer had it not been for the help I received with the task of editing, first and foremost by two incredibly skilled and competent assistants, Elena Fellner and Sophia Hiss – and in the final stages by the forever reliable Helen Blatherwick, who is a superb editor. I am grateful to all of them.

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Freiburg, January 2023
Johanna Pink

Introduction

Johanna Pink

In 1979, a retired Indonesian army officer called Bakri Syahid (1918–1994) published a Javanese Qurʾan translation titled *Al-Huda*.[1] It was based on the Qurʾan translation published by the Indonesian Ministry of Religious Affairs a decade earlier under the title *Al-Quräan dan terdjemahnja* ("The Qurʾan and Its Translation", later spelled *Al-Qur'an dan terjemahnya*).[2] *Al-Qur'an dan terjemahnya* had been written in Indonesian (*Bahasa Indonesia*), the official language of the Republic of Indonesia, which was at the time a rather recently established postcolonial nation state. Its government aimed to unite the linguistically diverse population through the promotion of a common language, and the language of choice was neither the former colonial language, Dutch, nor Javanese, the language with the largest number of speakers in the archipelago, but a new national language based on the *lingua franca*, Malay. None of the other languages spoken in the country, including Javanese, received official status.[3] However, in the 1970s, there were still many Indonesians who barely understood the Indonesian language, especially given the low levels of literacy among the rural population and poorer segments of the urban populace. Against this backdrop, it was Bakri's aim to provide speakers of Javanese with a resource that would enable them to understand the meaning of the Qurʾan.

The story of Bakri's Qurʾan translation, as well as that of the template on which it was based, *Al-Qur'an dan terjemahnya*, illustrate many aspects of the field of modern Qurʾan translation in Indonesia that are intriguing and deserving of further study. They also highlight the fact that some of the most important factors that define and frame the field are fairly recent innovations. The most obvious of these factors relates to the recent twentieth-century development of Indonesia into a nation state with a national language and with a government which has produced policies that pertain to both the religious and linguistic spheres. On a more fundamental level, the desire to produce a Qurʾan translation (*terjemah*) for the masses, given expression in the activities of both Bakri Syahid and the Ministry of Religious Affairs, is a modern innovation, as many previous translations and *tafsīr*s, or Qurʾanic commentaries, tended to be aimed at a narrow community of learners, such as students or religious scholars. The same is true for the decision to have it printed as a Latin-script book (called *buku* in Indonesian), as opposed to printing it as an Arabic script textbook for a religious school (*kitab*), producing a manuscript copy or disseminating it orally. In Bakri's case, this decision is somewhat ironic, given

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the previously mentioned low level of literacy among his target group. Moreover, both translations have stylistic features that were unheard of in Malay-Indonesian vernacular Qurʾan translations prior to the twentieth century. In both cases, the target text is semantically and syntactically close to the source text, yet, unlike an interlinear translation, constitutes a coherent text in the target language. Likewise, both include only a limited amount of explanation and commentary, all of which is relegated to footnotes or inserted into the translation in brackets and is thus clearly distinct from the "translation proper". All this might appear to be in line with the very concept of "translation" to contemporary readers, but if we take into consideration the range of premodern translation practices in Indonesia (and, indeed, in much of the wider Islamicate world), it becomes clear that this way of translating the Qurʾan has no precedent in the archipelago any time before the twentieth century.

All these developments, which are manifest in Bakri Syahid's Qurʾan translation and many, many others, are not only recent but also multi-layered and contested. Indonesia is a linguistically superdiverse country with a Muslim-majority population, distinctive indigenous religious traditions and a government that is self-consciously active in the religious sphere. As such, the field of modern[4] Qurʾan translation in Indonesia is rich, multi-faceted and rife with tensions.

I will take *Al-Huda* and *Al-Qur'an dan terjemahnya* as a starting point to explore three defining features of the field which are crucial to understanding the framework of this book and situating the studies presented in its chapters.

One: *Terjemah*: a new exegetical genre

The first defining feature concerns our understanding of the genre of Qurʾan translation itself in the context of Indonesia. Nowadays, a translation of the Qurʾan is called a *terjemah* in the Indonesian language and among Indonesian Islamic scholars, and there is considerable debate around the distinction between *terjemah* and *tafsir*, or Qurʾanic commentary. For example, while Bakri called his *Al-Huda* a *tafsir*, the Ministry of Religious Affairs used the term *terjemah* for its Qurʾan translation, despite the fact that these works are similarly structured. The murkiness surrounding the terminology of *tafsir* versus *terjemah* is obviously ideological and depends on whether an individual considers it possible to produce an equivalent of the Arabic source text or whether nothing more than an interpretation is feasible; in the same vein, there is an Indonesian debate on the merits and risks of "literal" versus "exegetical" translation (*terjemah harfiya* versus *terjemah maknawiya*). But the ideological issue has deeper historical roots.

While we still lack a conceptual history of the term *terjemah* in Indonesia or other Islamicate contexts,[5] it is clear that practices of rendering the Qurʾan's meaning in regional vernaculars date back to at least the seventeenth century[6] but that those practices had little to do with what would today be described as *terjemah*. They most likely included oral translations produced for purposes of preaching and teaching, and written translations from the premodern period have survived in the form of interlinear translations and paraphrases that were probably used in

educational contexts, as well as short Qurʾanic commentaries.[7] All of these genres coexisted with the Arabic source text and were interdependent with it.

In the nineteenth century, printing technologies started to spread and it became easier, and cheaper, to gain access to texts of all kinds. In the first decade of the twentieth century, a printed Qurʾan translation into Javanese sparked off controversy. The work in question, written by Bagus Ngarpah (d. 1913), had roots in the reformist milieu of the palace (*kraton*) of Solo, and the fact that it had the potential to reach a wide audience due to its print format clearly contributed to the heated debate on its permissibility.[8] It was also controversial due to the fact that it was a monolingual Javanese translation, which did not include the text of the original Arabic Qurʾan (*muṣḥaf*), thereby signifying the emergence of a new genre of translation that could be read independently of the source text. While Bakri and the Ministry of Religious Affairs published their works in bilingual editions, it is clear that both books belong to the same modern genre of translation.

The essential difference between premodern archipelagic practices of Qurʾan translation and the modern genre of *terjemah* can be described as follows: While premodern Qurʾan translations in the Indonesian archipelago, whether they were interlinear translations or constituted a running text, were self-conscious attempts on the parts of individual scholars or teachers to render the Qurʾan's meaning in their own words, and with their own voice, the new genre of translation was based on the European paradigm of the "invisible translator".[9] The target text purports to be a precise equivalent of the source text, at least on the semantic level, in the sense that it gives immediate access to its meaning. The translation stays close to the source text, without the additions that were previously commonly used to fill in ellipses or provide clarifications. For example, if the Qurʾan tells a story, the agent is not always clarified; the term *qāla* ("he said") is often used several times in a row without mentioning the speaker. Premodern translators typically had no qualms about filling in this gap, rendering the Arabic *qāla* as "Moses said" or "Solomon said". Modern translators would not do this because, to them, this would be an illicit addition to the source text, or if they felt it necessary to clarify the agent, they would add the information in brackets or in a footnote, clearly separating it from the "translation proper".

This separation has a significant effect on how the target text is understood by the reader, as the translation itself is framed not so much as an individual exegete's opinion but as an objective rendering of the Qurʾan's meaning or, above and beyond this, as the essence of the Islamic exegetical tradition. *Al-Qur'an dan terjemahnya* epitomizes this re-conceptualization of Qurʾan translation due to the significant fact that it was not written by an individual scholar but rather by a committee of scholars who were appointed by the government. The committee members' contributions were edited in way that erased the stylistic and exegetical agency of individual scholars.[10] As such, the translation thus represented the authority of a collective of scholars, or could even be said to suggest consensus (*ijmāʿ*).

The idea of Qurʾan translation by committee was not exclusive to Indonesia; in Turkey, it had already become fashionable by the early twentieth century.[11] However, although fashionable, it was rarely implemented, and even less so by official or

semi-official institutions. Nowhere has the idea of Qurʾan translation by committee turned out to be as successful as in the Republic of Indonesia, where *Al-Qur'an dan terjemahnya* has become *the* authoritative Qurʾan translation. Its success is partly based on the authority of the state and partly on the collective authority of its authors, who represent to its readers the mainstream traditional, Ashʿari-Shafiʿi scholarship that characterizes Malay-Indonesian Islam.

Yet, paradoxically, *Al-Qur'an dan terjemahnya* is in many ways disconnected from traditional scholarship. While all of its various editions and revisions contained the Arabic *muṣḥaf*, the intention of the translation was to ensure that readers with no knowledge of Arabic and no religious training could understand it. Unlike premodern vernacular translations that were always in dialogue with the source text, this new translation was envisaged as a one-dimensional transfer of meaning towards its readers. Moreover, it was printed in Latin script, the alphabet of the new national language, and not in the Arabic *jawi* and *pegon* scripts (that were traditionally used for texts in Malay and Javanese, respectively), which necessitated a clear separation of source and target text in the layout of the book.[12]

From what we know, the bilingual column-style layout in Qurʾan translations was first introduced to Indonesia by the Lahore Ahmadiyya movement from the Indian subcontinent,[13] about which more will be said later. This points to the fact that the emergence of the modern type of Qurʾan translation in twentieth-century Indonesia was not an isolated phenomenon; it represented a global development. It was also part of a wider literary trend in which many Islamicate societies adopted a concept of translation that was new to them – a modern European model that was based on the ideal of the "invisible translator". However, the contemporary prevalence of that model should not obscure from our view the wide variety of practices that Muslims in the archipelago have used, and continue to use, in order to reconstruct the meaning of the Qurʾan in their languages. The model employed by *Al-Huda* and its template, *Al-Qur'an dan terjemahnya*, is just one of many possible ways of reconstructing meaning,[14] as some of the chapters in this volume will show.

Two: language and language policy

The second defining feature of Qurʾan translation in modern Indonesia pertains to language, and more specifically to the fact that the choice of language took place in a politically charged setting which heavily influenced the prestige, convenience and political support accorded to the many vernacular languages that were theoretically available to translators. From the 1920s, the Malay vernacular that was defined as *Bahasa Indonesia* by Indonesian nationalists in 1928 was increasingly used as a medium for translating the Qurʾan. *Al-Qur'an dan terjemahnya*, for example, was deliberately written in that language. However, as is typical of many nation states that are trying to establish a national language, Indonesian was by no means the only one used for speaking and writing. Bakri, for example, had opted for Javanese for his translation, but there were, and are,

many more languages he could have used – so many more that the Indonesian linguistic arena has been described as "superdiverse".[15] Nevertheless, by the turn of the millennium, the Indonesian language had completely outperformed all others in the field of published Qurʾan translations.

It might seem that Javanese and a number of other regional languages possessed an initial advantage over the new national Indonesian language because they were used in Islamic schools across the archipelago and were firmly embedded in this pedagogical context. Students spoke languages such as Javanese, Sundanese or Minangkabau at school and at home. However, the focus of these schools was on teaching literacy in Arabic, not the vernacular. Moreover, Qurʾanic exegesis was only a marginal part of the curriculum; Islamic law, theology, and Arabic grammar were far more important. Teachers did teach students to memorize and recite the Qurʾan in Arabic, and advanced students were sometimes guided towards its meaning through reading an Arabic *tafsīr* – typically the concise, fifteenth-century *Tafsīr al-Jalālayn* that paraphrases the Arabic text with some additional explanations[16] – but recourse to translations of the Qurʾan was not necessary to achieve any of these pedagogical aims. Therefore, while there was some translation activity by Javanese scholars, including nationalist-leaning reformists,[17] the corpus was neither big nor widespread enough to stand in the way of the post-independence success of Indonesian-language Qurʾan translations.

The other initial competitor to the Indonesian language was Dutch, the language of Indonesia's colonizers. Dutch was also the acquired language of the nationalist intellectuals who had been raised in colonial schools. And while these intellectuals favored the Indonesian language in theory, they found it far easier to deal with Dutch texts. This was partly simply because of their familiarity with Latin script. While the Indonesian nationalists usually had oral mastery of local languages, written vernacular religious texts in the languages of the Malay-Indonesian archipelago were inaccessible to them because in the 1920s, those texts were usually printed in Arabic script, and Javanese texts were sometimes in *carakan*, a traditional script. Neither of these scripts were taught in colonial schools. This explains why a great many Indonesian nationalist Muslims embraced the Dutch Qurʾan translation by Soedewo, a Javanese Muslim, when it was published in 1934.[18] He was a member of the reformist Lahore Ahmadiyya movement that was increasingly labelled as heretical by Muslim scholars and activists. In fact, rather than being based on the Arabic text, his Qurʾan translation was a retranslation of the English Qurʾan translation by the movement's leader, Muhammad Ali, first published in 1917.[19] None of this detracted from its success in Indonesia. The convenience of Dutch, coupled with the nationalists' ideological desire to promote Islam over the Dutch colonizers' Protestantism, led many Indonesian nationalist intellectuals, up to and including the first president of the Republic, Sukarno (1901–1970), to acquire Soedewo's translation and quote from it. It even exerted a strong, if unacknowledged, influence on the first edition of *Al-Qur'an dan terjemahnya*.[20]

However, following independence, the government of postcolonial Indonesia engaged in a robust and successful program designed to marginalize Dutch and establish the Indonesian language as the only language of the country, and *Al-Qur'an*

dan terjemahnya was an integral part of that attempt.[21] The Indonesian government recognized the great potential of translations of canonical texts to help canonize the new official language, disseminate it and enhance its prestige, in much the same way that biblical translations had contributed to the elevation of many European languages to the rank of a "national language". The government also used *Al-Qur'an dan terjemahnya* to bolster its efforts to standardize the language, since the production of a Qurʾan translation could be used to define an authoritative religious vocabulary.[22] This was a politically significant task, since many concepts could be expressed either in Arabic or Malay terms; for example, "God" could be translated as *Tuhan* or *Allah*, with different connotations.[23] Maybe more importantly, the goal of standardizing the Indonesian language was to create not just a shared space but a neutral ground, free of easily discernible regionalisms.[24] The most important component of that neutral ground was the lexicon; hence the importance of the semantic choices made in *Al-Qur'an dan terjemahnya*.

Bakri Syahid's *Al-Huda* ran counter to this policy, even if Bakri adopted the format of *Al-Qur'an dan terjemahnya* and fully supported the government's agenda in all other ways. At a time when the project of establishing the national language was in full swing and was supported by the full weight of the government, Bakri wrote in Javanese. This was certainly one major reason his translation was accepted but never fully endorsed by the Ministry of Religious Affairs, despite his proximity to the ruling regime. It not only went against the government's objective of gaining religious legitimacy by co-opting the authority of the traditional ulama; it also went against the government's language policy which, unlike many other policies, remained unchanged during various political upheavals, bloody pogroms and the eventual coup in the 1960s.

It was only in the *reformasi* era that fundamental changes were made to Indonesia's language policy. In the 2000s and 2010s, the government rediscovered Indonesia's linguistic wealth and became more sensitive to its diversity.[25] This was reflected in the fact that the Ministry of Religious Affairs initiated Qurʾan translations into regional languages such as Banjarese and Sundanese during the 2010s. Of course, and quite typically, this only happened at a stage at which the status of the Indonesian language was no longer threatened by the existence of the myriad regional languages. Quite significantly, one language that was conspicuously not chosen for a government translation project was Javanese, allegedly because some Qurʾan translations into this language already existed, but the real reason is more likely related to the fact that Javanese, the largest and most prestigious regional language, still poses the greatest challenge to Indonesian, alongside the fact that the disproportionate influence of Javanese Indonesians in the political arena continues to be a cause of contention.

Private translators and publishers have always been involved in the production and publication of Qurʾan translations in the Indonesian context; scholars, writers and teachers continue to produce translations in a variety of languages. Nevertheless, the Indonesian government is not only the most influential producer of Qurʾan translation, its language policy also frames and shapes the linguistic choices that private translators make. This observation leads us to the third major feature of modern Indonesian Qurʾan translation: the central role of the state.

Three: the Indonesian state

Even though the Republic of Indonesia has never defined itself as an Islamic state, religion plays a central role in its constitutional framework, and the Ministry of Religion has been a crucial and powerful actor in the religious field throughout the three subsequent political regimes that governed Indonesia since its independence: President Sukarno's reign (1945–1967) with its ideology of Nasakom (*nationalisme, agama, komunisme*, or "nationalism, religion, communism"); President Suharto's "New Order" (*orde baru*) regime (1967–1998), which was anti-communist, emphasized the state philosophy of Pancasila[26] and built up Islamic institutions that were close to the state; and the *reformasi* era (since 1998) during which the country has experienced democratization, an increase in civil liberties and pluralism of expression but also growing religious conservatism and the resurgence of Islamist movements.[27]

A look at Bakri's *Al-Huda* and *Al-Qur'an dan terjemahnya* helps us to assess both the extent and the limits of state involvement in the field of Qurʾan translation. The importance of this field is evident from the mere fact that the Ministry of Religion (*Departemen Agama*, from 2010 *Kementerian Agama*), which first published *Al-Qur'an dan terjemahnya* in three volumes between 1965 and 1969, has continued to revise and reprint it ever since and has undertaken several major revisions to the text with newly formed committees of scholars. After all, *Al-Qur'an dan terjemahnya* was meant to demonstrate the capability of the republic's State Institutes of Islamic Studies (*Institut Agama Islam Negeri*, IAIN),[28] some of which have today gained the status of State Islamic Universities (*Universitas Islam Negeri*, UIN). The scholars employed in these institutes are funded by the state and linked to its administration in many ways. A more intimate connection between a government and a Qurʾan translation is hardly imaginable.

And yet, the committee members who worked on *Al-Qur'an dan terjemahnya* were obviously neither instructed nor willing to use their Qurʾan translation in order to openly promote the state's political ideology. While the forewords of the first editions give some indication of the political agendas of the Old and New Order regimes,[29] neither the text of the translation nor the notes refer to modern political institutions.[30] This is in marked contrast to the text produced by Bakri, a retired army general and rector of a State Islamic Institute, whose *Al-Huda*, while based on the ministry translation, is replete with footnotes that extol the government, the army, the secret service, village councils, state schools and elements of "Indonesian culture" that seem to be largely synonymous with Javanese village customs.[31]

Bakri's commentary is perfectly in line with the policy of the Suharto regime, which aimed to exert control over Islam through institutions and to place Pancasila at the center of Indonesian political discourses. This policy remained relevant even after Suharto's fall and has continued to shape Islamic discourses in the country throughout the *reformasi* era, albeit in a changed political setting that is less authoritarian. "Pancasila Islam" is based on a rhetoric of good citizenship and trust in strong government institutions. The same rhetoric was part of the extensive Qurʾanic commentary *Al-Qur'an dan tafsirnya* commissioned by the Suharto regime in the 1970s.[32]

That the authors and editors of *Al-Qur'an dan terjemahnya*, unlike Bakri, decided to largely ignore the rhetorical repertoire of "Pancasila Islam" and that even Bakri relegates it to the notes is illuminating for at least two reasons. First, the genre of Qurʾan translation inherently sets limits on the promotion of a political agenda. Bakri's notes might point to the inner workings of the Indonesian police, but inserting this message into the target text itself would be impossible for him without evoking the clear impression that he is doing violence to the source text. Therefore, Bakri was just as loath as the ministry's committee of scholars to forcefully adapt his *terjemah* to the political agenda of the day; whether it concerns the official discourse of political pluralism or the disapproval of polygamy, he relegated his propagandistic message to the commentary. This message was probably among the reasons for his decision to call his work a *tafsir*, whereas the Ministry of Religious Affairs used the term *terjemah*. But in both cases, the translators' interpretive license was limited by the wording and structure of the source text.

Second, the decision on the part of the scholars appointed by the Ministry to not use Qurʾan translation to overtly promote a political agenda proved wise because it may well have contributed to the lasting success of *Al-Qur'an dan terjemahnya*. Bakri Syahid's political commentary, with its references to specific policies and acronyms of government institutions, became outdated extremely fast, and *Al-Huda* saw few editions with a low print run. The fact that *Al-Qur'an dan terjemahnya*, in contrast, became such a spectacular success is in all likelihood a direct result of its producers' decision to frame it as an embodiment of timeless Islamic scholarship, bolstered by the full authority of the Islamic exegetical tradition. It purported to represent the mainstream of that tradition rather than an ephemeral human agenda.

The field of Qurʾan translation in modern Indonesia is thus shaped both by the relatively recently established Indonesian nation state and by the centuries-old Muslim exegetical tradition. It is characterized both by Indonesia's extreme linguistic diversity and the successful promotion of the Indonesian language as the language of the nation. This book aims to explore how Indonesian translators and translations navigate these tensions.

This book

The following chapters discuss the production and function of Qurʾan translations in modern Indonesia and shed further light on the areas of innovation and, potentially, conflict outlined previously: the emergence of a new exegetical genre against the backdrop of a centuries-old vernacular tradition, the changing language policies of colonial and postcolonial Indonesia and the religious agency of Indonesian state actors.

The first chapter, which functions as a prologue, engages with historical translation practices that predate the model of the "invisible translator". In this, Ervan Nurtawab and Fasjud Syukroni introduce us to an eighteenth-century interlinear Javanese translation of the Qurʾan and its features. They explore the unknown translator's agency, its interplay with his dependency on the *Tafsīr al-Jalālayn* and the means by which the translator indicated explanations that went beyond

the meaning of the source text. The content of this prologue significantly predates the field of modern Qurʾan translation in Indonesia, but it is precisely through studies of premodern Malay-Indonesian Qurʾan translation and *tafsir* such as this that we can fully appreciate the novelty of twentieth-century Qurʾan translations and their model of the "invisible translator". Ervan Nurtawab and Fasjud Syukroni explore an exegetical tradition that employed specific devices to make the translator visible, whereas modern translations such as *Al-Qur'an dan terjemahnya* and *Al-Huda* take care to achieve the opposite effect. This raises the central question of what defines a translation and how this concept has changed throughout Indonesian history. Detailed case studies such as the one presented in this prologue, of which there are still far too few, can help us gain a clearer picture of this fundamental issue.[33]

Following the prologue, the book is divided into two parts, each of which contains three chapters. The first part examines the politics of Qurʾan translation and highlights the fact that Qurʾan translations are often battlefields of larger contestations over religious authority and political power.[34] Allegations of erroneous translation may be used to attack opponents or perceived intruders and may even go so far as to invoke charges of heresy. Even *Al-Qur'an dan terjemahnya* is not protected from such charges, as became clear when the Islamist Muhammad Thalib fronted an attack against it in 2011, criticizing its translation choices as overly literal and thereby deviating from the exegetical consensus. The legitimacy of the state, which had produced this translation, clearly was at the heart of the issue.[35] Given the close relationship between religious and state institutions and the activities of the Ministry of Religious Affairs in the field of Qurʾan translation, the politicization of this field was probably unavoidable.

Moreover, as Najib Burhani's chapter demonstrates, modern Qurʾan translation has been a contentious subject in Indonesia since it first emerged, well before the foundation of the Republic of Indonesia. Burhani introduces readers to the tremendous influence that the Ahmadiyya movement, particularly the Lahore Ahmadiyya, exerted on the field of Qurʾan translation in Indonesia, as it did on so many others. That influence was often unacknowledged and, at a later stage, especially from the 1970s onwards, actively suppressed and contested. While controversial from the beginning, the Ahmadiyya's translation project, through the raging success of Soedewo's Dutch Qurʾan translation among secular-educated nationalist elites that has already been mentioned, has left a visible imprint on the style, structure and content of Qurʾan translations in the Indonesian language after independence. This is apparent not only from the layout of *Al-Qur'an dan terjemahnya* but even more so from the fact that the editors of the first edition copied large chunks of Soedewo's (or rather, Muhammad Ali's) foreword across to their own text, a choice that incurred criticism and ultimately resulted in the removal of all traces of the Ahmadiyya text from later editions. In the larger scheme of things, the case of the Ahmadiyya translation demonstrates that, within a few decades, the debate over the permissibility of Qurʾan translation itself had ceased to be relevant and had been replaced by conflicts over the correct approach towards translation as well as the authority required to produce one.

That these struggles continue to be leveraged against religious and political competitors is shown in Saifuddin Dhuhri's chapter, which analyzes the instrumental role of Qurʾan translation in the consolidation of the authority of the traditional institution of Islamic scholarship, the *dayah*, against the Wahhabi-Salafis in the province of Aceh. The somewhat surprising insight here, given the international discourse on Wahhabism, is the fact that it is the Wahhabi-Salafis who are labelled a heretic group and persecuted, based on their literal understanding of the anthropomorphic attributes of God. This case study not only illustrates the theological and political contestations involved in scriptural translation but also showcases a fundamental debate that permeates the field of Muslim Qurʾan translation, namely the question of whether a translation should be allowed to dispense with exegetical amendments and clarifications at the risk of readers gaining an understanding that is in conflict with prevailing theological doctrines. Taken to its logical conclusion, it raises the question of whether Muslims without a background in Qurʾanic exegesis should be directly exposed to the Qurʾan at all because the misunderstandings that are feared to result from a literal translation would result from a reading of the Arabic source text as well. Clearly, the ulama who condemn all too literal translations are motivated at least partly by the fear of losing their position as arbiters of meaning; the *dayah* ulama's opposition against the Wahhabi-Salafi approach to Qurʾan translation is not only informed by hermeneutical considerations but also the result of a power struggle.

If we read Najib Burhani's and Saifuddin Dhuhri's chapters in a larger historical perspective, they reflect a shift in the orientation of Muslim discourses on the Qurʾan in Indonesia. From the 1920s up until well past the middle of the twentieth century, there was controversy over the status of the Ahmadiyya movement, but this was tied in with a larger debate on modernism and scientific rationalism. Muhammad Ali's translation and Soedewo's retranslation had promoted these ideas, for example, by providing scientifically viable explanations for the prophetic miracles narrated in the Qurʾan. This appealed to many Muslim intellectuals of the time who wanted to integrate Islam into their anti-colonial vision of nationhood but without those elements of the religion that they perceived as outdated and irrational. Half a century later, by the beginning of the twenty-first century, a different fault line had emerged, as the chapter by Saifuddin Dhuhri shows: that between traditionalist ulama and Salafis. It is not that modernist voices have become extinct in Indonesia; liberal Islam and its proponents are still present and audible. However, it has to be noted that there is not a single complete Qurʾan translation in print in Indonesia today that could be associated with the liberal Islamic spectrum, and this is somewhat representative of a general shift in Islamic discourses towards conservatism, where the main site of conflict is between traditional Ashʿari-Shafiʿi scholars and Salafi trends.

This shift towards conservatism can also be noted with regard to *Al-Qur'an dan terjemahnya*, especially the reception of this translation, as Fadhli Lukman's chapter shows. He argues that it is increasingly sacralized, and, in the view of the general public, its meaning is equated with the meaning of the Qurʾan itself. This belief in the veracity of a translation that is firmly rooted in traditional Islamic

scholarship has fueled successive instances of moral panic and uproars over "un-Islamic" behavior, during which *Al-Qur'an dan terjemahnya* has been deployed to condemn the tendencies or persons that are considered objectionable. Fadhli Lukman's findings serve as a corrective to commonly held views of the Indonesian Islamic field as comparatively liberal and progressive. While liberal voices do enjoy freedom of expression in Indonesia, Fadhli Lukman's study shows that in a crucial segment of the religious discourse, the liberal camp lacks both authority and the kind of institutional output – in the form of a Qurʾan translation backed by an authoritative state institution – that would allow it to shape wider public debates.

The second part of the book addresses the multilingual makeup of Indonesia and its impact on the field of Qurʾan translation. As has also been addressed in the prologue, local ulama have used many of the regional languages of Indonesia for centuries to translate and explain the Qurʾan, often in pedagogical settings. The situation is complicated, however, by the multilingual nature of Indonesia, which results in a fragmentation of Islamic publishing and its audiences. Multilingualism has opened up new opportunities for the government to expand its translation activities in recent years in an unprecedented manner to include regional languages. But local ulama have used these languages to varying extents for the purpose of translating and explaining the Qurʾan long before this, often in pedagogical settings.

In my own chapter, I examine several Javanese Qurʾan translations in order to understand the impact of the Javanese language and context on the content and outcomes of the translation. This relates both to the social world in which Javanese *tafsir* is practiced, which is often in Islamic village schools (*pesantren*), and specific characteristics of the Javanese language, which differs from the Indonesian language in a crucial way: the use of registers to denote different levels of respect and social hierarchies. Consequently, when translators translate Qurʾanic narratives into Javanese, they are faced with a hermeneutical problem that does not exist in many other target languages, namely the need to construct a social setting that is not specified in the source text. The chapter concludes that studying Qurʾan translations in a wide variety of languages may allow for illuminating insights into ellipses and ambiguities of the Qurʾanic text that would not be apparent when analyzing it merely from the perspective of, for instance, the English or Indonesian language. It also highlights the fact that the label *tafsir* may, in fact, encompass a wide range of translation practices and that, in examining them, the social world of the target readership and their imaginary has to be taken into consideration, especially when dealing with Qurʾanic narratives.

Despite the potential of the myriad languages spoken in Indonesia for opening up new perspectives on the Qurʾan, the Indonesian Ministry of Religious Affairs has, as outlined previously, for a long time considered the linguistic richness of Indonesia at best irrelevant and at worst a threat to the status of the Indonesian national language. Consequently, throughout the twentieth century, translation activity in Javanese and other regional languages was a private endeavor, often undertaken by teachers or local scholars. Government policy towards Indonesia's multilingual heritage changed dramatically at the beginning of the twenty-first century, when the Ministry of Religious Affairs became directly involved in the production of

Qurʾan translations in local languages, sometimes developing existing translations, sometimes starting from scratch. Now at a point at which the status of the Indonesian language was no longer at risk, the government could afford, in line with global trends and sensitivities, to treat the multitude of Indonesian languages as a valuable culture heritage that needs to be preserved, and Qurʾan translations into languages such as Mandarese and Makassarese are part of that preservation effort. So far, however, there is very little research on the production and impact of these translations. The last two chapters of this book shed light on this important aspect of Qurʾan translation in Indonesia.

Jajang A. Rohmana's chapter allows readers to take an inside look at the implementation of one of these projects, the Sundanese Qurʾan translation published by the Ministry of Religious Affairs, which was produced by a committee of which the author was a part. It is extremely rare to gain such close insight into the translation process, and even rarer to find detailed descriptions of the workings of a "translation by committee" that involves predetermined criteria, a collective decision-making process, funding, deadlines and editors.

The subsequent chapter by Masyithah Mardhatillah on Madurese Qurʾan translation expands on this topic but also broadens the perspective because, in this case, the government translation was based on two previous projects, a private one and one that could be described as semi-official. Masyithah Mardhatillah describes how criticism of previous translations changed subsequent projects and how targets, methods and strategies were successively modified and adapted to the changing goals of the publishers.

These two chapters complement each other and, taken together, allow for a number of observations. First, for most of the smaller and less prestigious vernacular languages, the idea of producing Qurʾan translations in them emerged only recently, after the turn of the century. In many cases, this was a top-down process that was not based on substantial popular demand. The lack of demand was probably largely due to the dominance of the Indonesian language in all official and most written contexts. With the exception of Javanese, which has by far more speakers than Sundanese or Madurese, translation activity in regional languages was relatively marginal until the government took over. Second, unlike previous vernacular translations and *tafsir*s, ministry-sponsored translations into regional languages were always produced by committees, which is evidence of the profound impact of the model established by *Al-Qur'an dan terjemahnya* on the Indonesian field of Qurʾan translation. The composition of the committees reflects a desire to include specialists in the respective languages and literatures, but, in terms of the exegetical choices made in the translation, their members were bound to follow the precedent set by *Al-Qur'an dan terjemahnya* rather than taking into consideration local traditions or cultural expectations.

Given these limitations, it seems doubtful that the recently published clutch of regional language Qurʾan translations will even remotely replicate the enormous success of *Al-Qur'an dan terjemahnya*. While the latter is printed by myriad private publishers and can be found all over the internet and throughout the universe of smartphone apps, the regional language translations are printed only by

the Ministry of Religious Affairs, often in very small print runs; the Palembangese Qurʾan translation, for instance, is reported to have had a print run of only 70 copies.[36] From this, we can conclude that the production of the recent government-sponsored translations into regional languages was of a predominantly symbolic and performative nature. The focus was on bringing them into existence, not on ensuring that they found a readership. This is not an entirely atypical phenomenon in the history of Qurʾanic exegesis and Qurʾan translation, as such. There are quite a few books of *tafsir* and *terjemah*, premodern and modern, where the author's main interest seems to have been in their production, not in their reception. And some of them have been all but forgotten for precisely this reason.

In the global field of Qurʾan translation, the Indonesian case is both paradigmatic and unique, and for both reasons it is of interest to Islamicists beyond the small group of specialists in South-East Asian Islam. It is paradigmatic because the emergence of the modern genre of Qurʾan translation, which presents itself as an objective representation of both the Qurʾan's meaning and the mainstream exegetical tradition, is a global phenomenon and Indonesia is just one among many places in which it has developed. Much like other Muslim majority and minority contexts in which this genre has appeared, Indonesia was under the influence of European colonization and, at the same time, involved in transnational Muslim networks of *daʿwa* and publishing. In this respect, the analysis of the Indonesian case also provides insights into the transformations connected to the emergence of modern Islam.

Translators and publishers active in Indonesia not only had to ask whether and how to translate the Qurʾan, they also had to ask what language to translate it into, from among dozens of choices. This might appear to be a distinctive feature of the Indonesian case, at first glance, but as a matter of fact, multilingualism is extremely common; one need only think of the South Asian context that was central and instrumental to the rise of modern Qurʾan translation, where English and Urdu are often the focus of inquiry but dozens of other languages are potentially relevant. Yet the questions raised by multilingual contexts have rarely been addressed in academic studies of Qurʾan translation. Considering the particularly diverse Indonesian context, as this volume does, might prove a useful starting point. It will help us consider questions regarding the factors that inform a translator's choice of language, such as the educational levels of the target group, the medium of the translation, the respective prestige and usefulness of the languages in question, the translator's political stance and the readers' choice of the language in which they read (or listen to) a Qurʾan translation. It will also prompt us to think about the impact of the choice of language on the style and format of a translation.

Maybe the way in which Indonesia most stands out, when taking a comparative look at the field of Qurʾan translation in the twentieth and twenty-first centuries, is in the strong involvement of its government, in terms of both religious and language policy. No other nation state has been as successful at producing and distributing an official Qurʾan translation as the Republic of Indonesia. If one were to look for parallel developments in other fields of Islamic learning, fatwa committees come to mind. These exist in Indonesia, too, as they do in a large number of other

countries with a Muslim population. But what is common in the realm of fatwas is unique in the field of Qurʾan translation. While there was a comparable project in the early days of the Turkish Republic, it did not bear fruit; and later efforts to have Turkish public religious institutions publish Qurʾan translations always remained at the level of the work of individual, named scholars that constituted one option among many.[37] Some countries have government or government-sponsored institutions that produce and distribute Qurʾan translations in multiple languages, such as the King Fahd Complex for the Printing of the Holy Qurʾan, but unlike the Indonesian Ministry of Religious Affairs, these are predominantly active and successful outside their countries' borders and use Qurʾan translation as a tool of global soft power rather than for purposes of interior policy, interventions into the domestic religious field and language planning. As such, the Indonesian case invites us to think about the impact of nation states on modern religious discourses and practices, on the political role that traditional Islamic scholarship plays in this and on the construction of a type of religious legitimacy that is not dependent on the individual authority of a scholar. In the production of Qurʾan translations, these political and social processes enter a dialectic interaction with language and scripture. This book aims to show what can be gained from tracing that interaction in the multilingual kaleidoscope of Indonesian reconstructions of the Qurʾan's meaning.

Notes

1 Bakri Syahid, *Al-Huda: Tafsir Qur'an Basa Jawi*, 1st ed. (Yogyakarta: Bagus Arafah, 1979).
2 Departemen Agama Republik Indonesia, *Al-Quräan Dan Terdjemahnja*, vol. 1, 3 vols (Jakarta: Yamunu', 1965); Departemen Agama Republik Indonesia, *Al-Quräan Dan Terdjemahnja*, vol. 2, 3 vols (Jakarta: Yamunu', 1967); Departemen Agama Republik Indonesia, *Al-Quräan Dan Terdjemahnja*, vol. 3, 3 vols (Jakarta: Yamunu', 1969).
3 Lucy R. Montolalu and Leo Suryadinata, "National Language and Nation-Building: The Case of Bahasa Indonesia", in *Language, Nation and Development in Southeast Asia*, eds. Hock Guan Lee and Leo Suryadinata (Singapore: ISEAS Publishing, 2007), 39–50.
4 In this context, I use the terms "modern" and "modernity" to roughly describe the period starting in the early twentieth century, without any implicit normative claim of progressiveness or liberalism.
5 Ronit Ricci, "On the Untranslatability of 'Translation': Considerations from Java, Indonesia", *Translation Studies* 3, no. 3 (2010), 287–301; see also Travis Zadeh, *The Vernacular Qur'an: Translation and the Rise of Persian Exegesis* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2012).
6 See, for example, Peter G. Riddell, *Malay Court Religion, Culture and Language: Interpreting the Qur'an in 17th Century Aceh*, Texts and Studies on the Qur'an, vol. 12 (Leiden and Boston: Brill, 2017); Ervan Nurtawab, "The Tradition of Writing Qur'anic Commentaries in Java and Sunda", *Ṣuḥuf* 2, no. 2 (2009), 163–192.
7 Ervan Nurtawab, "Qur'anic Translations in Malay, Javanese, and Sundanese: A Commentary or Substitution?", in *The Qur'ān in Malay-Indonesian World: Context and Interpretation*, eds. Majid Daneshgar, Peter G. Riddell, and Andrew Rippin (London and New York: Routledge, 2016), 39–57; Nurtawab, "The Tradition of Writing Qur'anic Commentaries in Java and Sunda".
8 Johanna Pink, "The *kyai*'s Voice and the Arabic Qur'an: Translation, Orality, and Print in Modern Java", *Wacana* 21, no. 3 (2020), 350–351.

9 Lawrence Venuti, *The Translator's Invisibility: A History of Translation*, 2nd ed. (London: Routledge, 2008); Pink, "The *kyai*'s Voice and the Arabic Qur'an: Translation, Orality, and Print in Modern Java".
10 Fadhli Lukman, *The Official Indonesian Qur'ān Translation: The History and Politics of Al-Qur'ān dan Terjemahnya* (Cambridge: Open Book Publishers, 2022).
11 For similar discussions in the late Ottoman Empire and early Turkish Republic, see Susan Gunasti, *The Qur'an between the Ottoman Empire and the Turkish Republic: An Exegetical Tradition*, Routledge Studies in the Qur'an (London and New York: Routledge, 2019).
12 Johanna Pink, "Form Follows Function: Notes on the Arrangement of Texts in Printed Qur'an Translations", *Journal of Qur'anic Studies* 19, no. 1 (2017), 138–150.
13 Ahmad Najib Burhani, "Sectarian Translation of the Qur'an in Indonesia: The Case of the Ahmadiyya", *Al-Jami'ah: Journal of Islamic Studies* 53, no. 2 (2015), 251–282.
14 For the concept of reconstructing meaning and its historical and contemporary variance, see Maria Tymoczko, *Enlarging Translation, Empowering Translators* (Manchester and Kinderhook: St. Jerome Pub, 2007).
15 Zane Goebel, *Language and Superdiversity: Indonesians Knowledging at Home and Abroad*, Oxford Studies in Sociolinguistics (New York: Oxford University Press, 2015); Subhan Zein, *Language Policy in Superdiverse Indonesia*, First issued in paperback, Routledge Studies in Sociolinguistics (London and New York: Routledge, 2021).
16 Martin van Bruinessen, "Kitab Kuning", *Encyclopaedia of Islam, Three* (Leiden: Brill, 2020); Martin van Bruinessen, "Kitab Kuning: Books in Arabic Script Used in the Pesantren Milieu", *Bijdragen Tot de Taal-, Land-En Volkenkunde* 146 (1990), 226–269; Ervan Nurtawab, *Jalālayn Pedagogical Practice: Styles of Qur'an and Tafsir Learning in Contemporary Indonesia* (PhD thesis, Australia, Monash University, 2018), https://bridges.monash.edu/articles/Jalalayn_pedagogical_practice_Styles_of_Qur_an_and_tafsir_learning_in_contemporary_Indonesia/7290182.
17 Siti Mariatul Kiptiyah, *Warisan Islam Nusantara: Tafsir Al-Qur'an Carakan dan Narasi Reformisme* (Semarang: Lembaga Studi Sosial dan Agama, 2020).
18 Maulwi Moehammad Ali, *De heilige Qoer-an*, trans. Soedewo (Lahore: Ahmadiyyah Anjuman Isha'at Islam, 1934).
19 Maulvi Muhammad Ali, *The Holy Qur-án: Containing the Arabic Text with English Translation and Commentary* (Woking: The "Islamic Review" Office, 1917).
20 Burhani, "Sectarian Translation of the Qur'an in Indonesia".
21 Ali, *The Holy Qur-án*.
22 Lukman, *The Official Indonesian Qur'an Translation*.
23 As has been shown for the development of modern Chinese, scriptural translation has the potential to both transform and stabilize the target language, depending on the choice of terminology. See Stefan Henning, "God's Translator: Qur'an Translation and the Struggle over a Written National Language in 1930s China", *Modern China* 41, no. 6 (2015), 631–655. The Indonesian case, with its Muslim-majority population and strong tradition of religious scholarship, did not pose quite such daunting challenges, but the task of translating the Qurʾan was nevertheless combined with normative linguistic decisions about religious terminology.
24 For an instructive study of these concepts in the Dutch context, see Gijsbert Rutten, "Standardization and the Myth of Neutrality in Language History", *International Journal of the Sociology of Language* 242 (2016), 25–57.
25 Zein, *Language Policy in Superdiverse Indonesia*.
26 The Pancasila ("five principles") is the foundation of the Indonesian constitution and consists of the belief in one God, just and civilized humanity, the unity of Indonesia, "democracy guided by wisdom through deliberation and representation, and social justice for the Indonesian people".

27 Martin van Bruinessen, "Islamic State or State Islam? Fifty Years of State-Islam Relations in Indonesia", in *Indonesien am Ende des 20. Jahrhunderts: Analysen zu 50 Jahren unabhängiger Entwicklung*, ed. Ingrid Wessel (Hamburg: Abera-Verl. Meyer, 1999), 19–34; Martin van Bruinessen, "Introduction: Contemporary Developments in Indonesian Islam and the 'Convervative Turn' of the Early Twenty-First Century", in *Contemporary Developments in Indonesian Islam: Explaining the 'Conservative Turn'*, ed. Martin van Bruinessen (Singapore: ISEAS, 2013), 1–20.
28 Howard M. Federspiel, *Popular Indonesian Literature of the Qur'an* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1994); Lukman, *The Official Indonesian Qur'an Translation*.
29 Moch. Nur Ichwan, "Negara, Kitab Suci dan Politik: Terjemahan Resmi Al-Qur'an di Indonesia", in *Sadur Sejarah Terjemahan di Indonesia dan Malaysia*, ed. Henri Chambert-Loir (Jakarta: Kepustakaan Populer Gramedia, 2009), 417–433.
30 Lukman, *The Official Indonesian Qur'an Transl*.
31 Nurul Huda, *Penafsiran Politik. Kajian atas Tafsir al-Huda Karya Kolonel Bakri Syahid* (Banten: Pustaka Qi Falah, 2014).
32 Federspiel, *Popular Indonesian Literature of the Qur'an*, 64–69; Johanna Pink, *Muslim Qur'ānic Interpretation Today: Media, Genealogies and Interpretive Communities* (Sheffield: Equinox, 2019), 214–218.
33 Ricci, "On the Untranslatability of 'Translation'".
34 Johanna Pink, "Text, Auslegung, Ritus: Indonesische Kontroversen um die richtige und falsche Übersetzung des Korans", in *Heilige Texte. Formen und Normative Grenzen der Übertragung in Judentum, Christentum und Islam*, eds. Katharina Heyden and Henrike Manuwald (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2017), 63–89.
35 Munirul Ikhwan, "Fī taḥaddī al-dawla: 'Al-tarjama al-tafsīriyya' fī muwājahat al-khiṭāb al-dīnī al-rasmī li'l-dawla al-Indūnīsiyya", *Journal of Qur'anic Studies* 15, no. 3 (2015), 121–157.
36 https://gloqur.de/quran-translation-of-the-week-99-the-state-sponsored-translation-of-the-quran-into-palembang-religious-moderation-and-language-dilemma/, accessed 17 May 2022.
37 Gunasti, *The Qur'an between the Ottoman Empire and the Turkish Republic*; Brett Wilson, "The First Translations of the Qur'an in Modern Turkey", *International Journal of Middle East Studies* 41 (2009), 419–435.

Prologue

A historical perspective on Indonesian Qurʾan translation

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1 Qur'anic Arabic, *Tafsīr al-Jalālayn* and Javanese

Javanese translation in an eighteenth-century Banten Qurʾan

Ervan Nurtawab and Fasjud Syukroni

Introduction[1]

This chapter examines the Javanese interlinear translation found in the Qurʾanic manuscript A.54 (henceforth: MS Qurʾan A.54), which forms part of the collection of the National Library of the Republic of Indonesia (*Perpustakaan Nasional Republik Indonesia*, or PNRI), and explores the part this translation played in making the meaning of the Qurʾan accessible to non-Arabic speakers in eighteenth-century Banten. The work was part of the manuscript collection of the Royal Banten Library until 1835, when the entire collection was presented to the Bataviaasch Genootschap (now the PNRI). Based on the catalogue of Friederich and van den Berg, a number of the Qurʾans and commentaries *(tafsīr)* in this collection, including MS Qurʾan A.54, have translations written in Javanese *pegon* (Arabic script),[2] while MS Qurʾan A.51 and MS Qurʾan W.277 contain Malay translations.[3] Based mainly on examination of Javanese translations of the first of 30 parts (*juzʾ*, pl. *ajzāʾ*) of the Qurʾan, this chapter looks at the way in which Qurʾanic Arabic words and expressions were translated, interpreted and communicated to Javanese readers in eighteenth-century Banten.

Many scholars have studied the history, institutions, culture and literature of Banten society. For example, Djajadiningrat's classic 1913 study, *Critische beschouwing van de Sadjarah Banten. Bijdrage ter kenschetsing van de Javaansche geschiedschrijving*,[4] reconstructed the history of the Banten sultanate through his analysis of the manuscripts of Banten historical chronicles, *Babad Banten*. Other scholarly works were published in the following decades, and, from the 1990s onward, there has been a resurgence in interest in Banten studies. Van Bruinessen, for example, has examined the importance of the three main religio-political institutions in the Banten sultanate (namely the *sharīʿa* courts, Sufi orders and Islamic educational institutions).[5] Meanwhile, Pudjiastuti has studied surviving letters so as to analyze the ways that Bantenese rulers maintained their diplomatic ties with the outside world from the early period in the seventeenth century to the beginning of the nineteenth century.[6] Others have concentrated on the Islamic tradition in Banten. Yakin, for example, has scrutinized aspects of Islamic law in the seventeenth- and eighteenth-century Banten legal treatise *Undang-Undang Banten*;[7] Kurniawan has looked at the charismatic Sufi

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figure and religious teacher, ʿAbd Allāh ibn ʿAbd al-Qahhār al-Bantanī;[8] and Gallop and Akbar have analyzed the illuminations and calligraphy found in Banten Qurʾanic manuscripts.[9] Aside from that, evidence of the connection between the Islamic tradition of Banten and other parts of the archipelago in Mindanao has been uncovered by Fathurahman, who investigated a number of Sufi texts found among the manuscript collection of a Mindanao religious scholar (*ulama*) in Marawi City: Fathurahman has argued that some Mindanao ulama had identifiable links to the eighteenth-century Banten scholar mentioned previously, ʿAbd Allāh ibn ʿAbd al-Qahhār.[10]

However, despite such longstanding interest in the Islamic history of the Bantenese sultanate, scholars have so far overlooked the existence of Qurʾanic exegetical and translation activity. This is particularly striking given that, based on the catalogue of Friederich and Van den Berg,[11] Qurʾan and *tafsīr* works constitute a significant number of the manuscript copies in the Royal Banten Library. Previous work by one of the authors of this chapter, Ervan Nurtawab, has examined two aspects of the Banten Qurʾans A.51 and W.277, namely Qurʾanic readings and Malay translations, with specific reference to why the author(s) chose Malay as the target language for translation in both works. This article confirmed the important role played by the *Tafsīr al-Jalālayn*, a fifteenth-century concise Arabic Qurʾanic commentary, as a major reference that forms a bridge between the translation process and the source text, namely the Arabic Qurʾan, thereby showing the dependence of the translator on Qurʾanic commentaries, especially, in this case, the *Jalālayn*.[12] In our study of MS Qurʾan A.54 in this chapter, we explore the relevance of the *Jalālayn* to this particular manuscript from two particular perspectives: First, to what extent does the *Jalālayn* influence the Javanese translation found in MS Qurʾan A.54? And second, how does the translator negotiate those meanings that emerge from his own personal point of view and communicate them to the Javanese readers? For example, on occasions the copyist of MS Qurʾan A.54 decided to interpret certain words and phrases more broadly, while the *Jalālayn* intended them to have specific meanings. This chapter also has a wider relevance to the study of the broader Qurʾanic exegetical tradition in the Malay-Indonesian world: its findings on the relationship between the *Jalālayn* and the interlinear translation provided in MS Qurʾan A.54 strengthens scholars' understanding that the *Jalālayn* was the dominant source used in the first complete Malay commentary, the *Tarjumān al-mustafīd*.[13]

MS Qurʾan A.54 contains the *Jalālayn* text, and this text was later inserted, possibly by a user, in the gaps between the lines of the Qurʾanic text, besides the Javanese translation.[14] This insertion is possible due to the fact that the Qurʾan copyist left large spaces between the lines of the Arabic text to allow room for the Javanese interlinear translation text, which is generally longer, to run smoothly.[15] The existence of the inserted *Jalālayn* text confirms its importance both to the readers of the text and as a teaching aide through which the audience could understand the Qurʾan. This corresponds to current-day practice, according to which Indonesian Muslims who have been educated using traditional methods of Islamic learning still nowadays usually have the *Jalālayn* in mind when studying the Qurʾan.

Beginning of juzʾ 25 from Banten Qurʾan A.54e, PNRI (National Library of the Republic of Indonesia), pp. 1–2, image courtesy of Annabel Teh Gallop.

MS Qurʾan A.54 is large in size and is split into five volumes. Gallop and Akbar state that this is the case with many Qurʾan copies from Banten and is one of the main characteristics of the Banten Qurʾan tradition. The manuscript has eighteen lines per page, and these are often allocated equally: nine lines to the Qurʾanic Arabic (in red) and nine to the Javanese text (in black). However, on in other instances, the number of lines allocated to the two texts on each page varies greatly, and the Arabic text is written with gaps of varying size in between to allow the Javanese translation to progress at the same rate as the source text.[16] Based on our study of the Qurʾanic text in *juzʾ* 1, we find some cases where the copyist of MS Qurʾan A.54 wrote only a few words of Arabic text in a given line but then used up to eight lines for the Javanese translation.

The fact that MS Qurʾan A.54 contains more Javanese than Arabic words leads us to propose two possibilities. First, since translation is a difficult task, and target and source languages do not always match with regard to vocabulary, in many cases the copyist of MS Qurʾan A.54 clearly felt he needed more words to transmit the – in his opinion – correct meaning of the Qurʾanic text. For this reason, the translation process frequently required the copyist to be proficient in two disciplines: Arabic and *tafsīr*. This requirement then guides our thinking toward the second possibility, namely that the copyist of MS Qurʾan A.54 actually intended to set up the work to serve a dual function, both as a medium of Qurʾan recitation and as a commentary.

A physical examination of this work reveals that it lacks *juzʾ* 15–16, which should have been included in the third volume. We are certain that *juzʾ* 15–16 were originally included, given that it is unlikely that Qurʾan copies such as MS Qurʾan A.54 would have been originally created as partial copies. For this reason, we assume that the two missing *juzʾ* must have been removed from the volume at some stage after its completion and that, while their location remains unknown up to the present time, they must have been available at some time in the past. On the basis of these assumptions, we suggest that the eighteenth-century Banten MS Qurʾan A.54 can be considered the earliest exegetical endeavor to cover the whole Qurʾan using Javanese *pegon* that has ever been found.

The importance of Javanese in eighteenth-century Banten

When looking at texts in any multi-lingual society, an awareness of the way specific languages are chosen for specific social contexts is an essential prerequisite for understanding the position of each extant document in a given environment: any decision to choose one language over another is certainly made for good reason and often relates to the issue of why the people who were actively speaking a particular language need to read that particular work. By considering these aspects, we can, for example, determine how the Islamic textual tradition developed in a given society and why certain types of Islamic texts received social acceptance. Accordingly, in this section, we identify the ways in which languages functioned socially in eighteenth-century Banten and suggest that Malay and Javanese, both languages that were usually written using Arabic script, played an important role in maintaining social communication.

In her *Perang, dagang, persahabatan*, Pudjiastuti examined more than 50 diplomatic letters that the Bantenese kings sent from the early seventeenth to nineteenth centuries and concluded that Malay was used much more often for communication with the outside world than other languages.[17] As is apparent from studies by Yakin about surviving documents from the religious courts of eighteenth-century Banten, Javanese, on the other hand, was the language of court administration and, most likely, daily conversation.[18] Javanese was also used for pedagogical practices, judging by the surviving Islamic manuscripts from the Royal Banten Library collection. Students of Islamic higher learning during the Banten sultanate period were accustomed to using Javanese as their language of education and, up to the current day, traditional Islamic educational institutions that use *kitab* – that is, books printed in Arabic script – as a pedagogical tool in the Banten province conduct teaching in either Javanese, Sundanese or Malay/Indonesian, depending on the teacher's background.

For comparison, it is worthwhile discussing language choices for communication in Batavia during the same period, considering the fact that it is only 80 kilometers away from Banten. Robson states that Batavia, during the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, was an international city where two European languages, Dutch and Portuguese, as well as Malay (as the lingua franca of Southeast Asia), served for communication among the inhabitants. Batavia was, in one sense, an

isolated city, as it was generally forbidden for local inhabitants from the highlands of West Java and, more broadly speaking, Javanese people in general to live there. Consequently, since members of these ethnicities did not live there in great numbers, neither Javanese nor Sundanese was dominant in Batavia. Instead, the Batavian inhabitants developed the Jakarta Malay language.[19] However, Javanese *pegon* was widely used outside Batavia during the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, especially in the Banten and Western Javanese regions, confirming the importance of this language. The Royal Banten Library owned two voluminous copies of the *Jalālayn* with Javanese translation,[20] a fact which can be taken as evidence of the active participation of Javanese authors in providing materials of Islamic learning to Muslim societies in Banten and West Java during the colonial period.

Banten Islamic literature owes much to the interlinear translation process, which correlates with common practice in classical Malay literature.[21] As mentioned, in the case of MS Qurʾan A.54, the decision to provide interlinear translations affected the way the Arabic text was written: with gaps in accordance with the possible length of the translation and explanatory glosses. Furthermore, the differing number of lines allocated to the Javanese translation suggest that the copyist did not go on to write the next line of Qurʾanic Arabic until he was satisfied with the translation, meaning that copying the original text and providing the interpretation was an integrated process. Compared to the mode of word-by-word translation in which the translation is positioned alongside the main text, interlinear translations allow the translator to produce a translation text that flows more smoothly.

Ever since its establishment in the sixteenth century, the Banten sultanate has had a strong connection with the two Javanese kingdoms of Demak and Cirebon.[22] For this reason, our study of the Javanese *pegon* found in MS Qurʾan A.54 is also based on the assumption that, linguistically speaking, there is a genealogical link between the Banten Javanese-speaking community and those in Demak and Cirebon. How Javanese *pegon* was used for the study of the Qurʾan and what role some popular Arabic commentaries, especially the *Jalālayn*, played in making the meaning of the Qurʾanic text accessible to local audiences in Southeast Asia will be discussed in the next sections.

Qurʾanic Arabic, *Tafsīr al-Jalālayn* and Javanese

There has previously been a tendency among scholars to identify MS Qurʾan A.54 as simply a copy of the Qurʾan.[23] However, we would like to emphasize its function as a Qurʾanic commentary, given that on many pages the interlinear Javanese translation occupies more space than the original Qurʾanic Arabic. It is very clear that in the case of this particular manuscript, the copyist transcribed both the Qurʾanic text and the accompanying translation. The fact that the translation and glosses take up more space than the Qurʾanic text allows us to see the intentions of the copyist in writing the Qurʾan with a Javanese translation: whether he just copied the Qurʾan and then added the translation later or whether at the outset he actually intended to provide renderings and glosses. This resembles what we see in Malay Qurʾanic commentaries such as *Tarjumān al-mustafīd*, the eighteenth-century

Banten Qurʾan manuscripts A.51 and W.277 or the Malay *tafsīr* kept in the library of a Mindanao religious scholar in Marawi City, possibly from the nineteenth century, that has been called the *SMS Malay Tafsīr*.[24]

Translation was a vital feature of the Islamic textual tradition in Banten, and the Qurʾan and the *Jalālayn* were among the Arabic texts that received the most attention from Muslim authors and translators. The significant number of voluminous copies of these two works in the Royal Banten Library confirms that the Bantenese rulers supported these translation projects, not least by ensuring a constant supply of European paper in large quantities. Van Bruinessen has suggested that a central figure of Bantenese Muslim society in the late eighteenth century, ʿAbd Allāh ibn ʿAbd al-Qahhār, might be responsible for the existence of a number of Islamic works in both Arabic and Javanese.[25] Although the identity of the person who copied MS Qurʾan A.54 is unknown, the project of copying this Qurʾan might therefore stem from one of ʿAbd Allāh ibn ʿAbd al-Qahhār's initiatives, which were approved by the rulers on the basis that they served Islamic pedagogical purposes.

When talking about Indonesian translations of the Qurʾan, it is worthwhile to consider Ronit Ricci's typology of the three paradigms in translation – holistic, sentence-by-sentence and interlinear – that have become characteristic of the Islamic textual tradition in the Malay-Indonesian world. Ricci suggests that these three paradigms are not mutually exclusive, so that one type of translation can overlap with another, and that this is especially the case with sentence-by-sentence and interlinear translation.[26] Referring to this typology, we identify the translation in MS Qurʾan A.54 as belonging to the category of translation at sentence level, where the Arabic text is placed on top and the translation in lines underneath. In terms of classifying the translation in MS Qurʾan A.54, Ricci's categorization of Southeast Asian translations as being either [1] accurately translated, [2] involving significant change or [3] omitted completely is also relevant.[27] At the outset of this chapter, we stated that we are certain that the copyist of MS Qurʾan A.54 must have had the *Jalālayn* to hand during the translation process. Ricci's typology is therefore useful in helping to measure the role of the *Jalālayn* in building a bridge to the meaning of the Qurʾanic text for Javanese readers.

Translations of *Sūrat al-Fātiḥa*

When looking at the translation of the Qurʾan provided in MS Qurʾan A.54, it is important to compare it to translations provided in other Malay and Javanese translations to see the degree of uniformity in translation. In looking at patterns in the translation of this *sūra*, we have therefore compared examples of Javanese translations produced up to the nineteenth century with that provided in MS Qurʾan A.54. In so doing, we can benefit from MSS I2, IS.1 and W.330 (previously identified as possible candidates for comparison by Nurtawab),[28] all of which probably date back to the nineteenth century. The first two of these manuscripts (I2 and IS.1) are from Western Java, and the latter (W.330) is part of the collection of the Yogyakarta Royal Court.

As previously stated, MS Qurʾan A.54 refers to the *Jalālayn* more than any other work of *tafsīr*. However, we detected a discrepancy between the translation of *Sūrat al-Fātiḥa* found in all of the manuscripts mentioned in the previous paragraph, including MS Qurʾan A.54, and the interpretation given in the *Jalālayn*. This pattern tells us that *Sūrat al-Fātiḥa* was understood in the same way among Southeast Asian Muslims but that this understanding cannot be attributed to the *Jalālayn*. Our assumption is that the Southeast Asian translators working on these manuscripts did not refer to the *Jalālayn* in translating this *sūra* because in the *Jalālayn*, commentary on *Sūrat al-Fātiḥa* is placed at the end, which makes it quite easy to overlook.[29] In connection to this, the translators of these works seemed to be more or less in agreement about the interpretations that should, or should not, be included in their translations. We therefore suggest that another possible reason similar patterns of translation are present is that Muslims in Southeast Asia were already familiar with the meaning of this *sūra*, and for this reason, there was no need for the translator to give additional explanations taken from the *Jalālayn* or other sources, with the exception of Q 1:3, as will be elaborated upon in the following.

As presented in Table 1.1, Q 1:1 was mostly simply provided in Arabic without an accompanying translation. This resembles the format of the printed edition of the *Jalālayn* we used for the purpose of this chapter, in which this verse (Q 1:1) is treated as the chapter heading without any accompanying exegesis. In this connection, it is also useful to consider the explanation found in the chapter heading of the printed *Jalālayn*, which reads as follows:

> *Makkiyya sabʿ āyāt biʾl-bismillāh in kānat minhā, wa-al-sābiʿa ṣirāṭ alladhīna ilā ākhirihā wa-in lam takun minhā faʾl-sābiʿa ghayr al-maghḍūb ilā ākhirihā . . .*[30]
>
> Seven Meccan verses, including the [verse] *bismillāh*, if it is included in it [the *sūra*], with the seventh [verse] being *ṣirāṭ al-ladhīna* until its end. And if [the] *bismillah* is excluded, then the seventh [verse] is *ghayr al-maghḍūb* until its end. . . .).

As can be seen in Table 1.1, we find a tendency among the eighteenth- to nineteenth-century Javanese translators to treat Q 1:1 as the *sūra* heading, without translation, and the verse is usually placed in the ornamental frame that surrounds the Arabic text or copied with decorative calligraphy.

As can also be seen in Table 1.1, the translation of the following verse, Q 1:2, is presented without the additional information that appears in the *Jalālayn*, which glosses this verse as follows:

> Praise be to God, is a predicate of a nominal clause, the content of which is intended to extol God [by stating that]: He possesses the praise of all creatures, or that He [alone] deserves their praise. God is a proper noun for the One truly worthy of worship; Lord of all Worlds, that is, [He is] the One Who owns all of creation: humans, jinn, angels, animals and others as well, each of which may be referred to as a "world"; one says "the world of men", or "world of the jinn"

Table 1.1 Javanese translations of *Sūrat al-Fātiḥa*

Verse	*A.54*	*IS.1*	*W.330*	*I2*
Q 1:1	[No translation provided]	[No translation provided]	Angawiti ingsun kelawan ngalap berkah asmane Allah kang Murah ing dunia kang asih ing akhirat	[No translation provided]
Q 1:2	Utawi sekabehe puji iku kaduwe ing Allah pangeran ing ‘alam kabeh	Utawi sakehe puji kaduwe Allah pangerane ngalam kabeh	Utawi sakehe puji iku kaduwe Allah kang mangerane ngalam kabeh	Utawi sakehe puji iku ing Allah pangerane ing alam kabeh
Q 1:3	Kang murah ing dunya kang asih ing akhirat	Kang murah ing dunia kang asih ing akhirat	Kang murah ing dunia kang asih ing akhirat	Kang murah ing dunia kang asih ing akhirat
Q 1:4	Ratu ingdina kiamat	Kang dadi ratu ing dina wekasan	Kang ngeratoni ing dinane kiamat	Kang angratoni ing dina kiamat
Q 1:5	Ing tuan uga amba anembah lan ing tuan uga amba aneda tulung	Datang ing tuan anembah kawula lan datang ing tuan neda pitulung kawula	Ing tuan nembah kula lan ing tuan nuwun tulung kula	Ing tuan amba anemba lan ing tuan amba aneda tulung tuan aneda tulung tuan
Q 1:6	Tuan tuduhana amba ing dedalan kang bener	Anuduhna tuan ing kula ing dadalan kang bener	Mugi nuduhna tuan ing kula ing dalan kang bener	Tuduhken amba ing dadalan kang bener
Q 1:7	Dedalan kang tuan sungi nikmat ingatase wongiku kabeh liyan wong kang tuan bendoni ingatase wongiku kabeh lan liyan wong kang sasar iku.	Kaduwe dedalane wong kang tuan paring nikmat ingatase wongiku kabeh liyane dedalane wong kang tuan bendoni ingatase wong iku kabeh lan liyane dedalane wong kang tuan sasaraken	Dalane wong akeh kang paring nikmat tuan ingatase wong akeh dina bendoni ingatase wong akeh lan liyane wong kang pada sasar	Ing dadalane sakehe wong kang tuan paringi nikmat ingatase wong iku kabeh liyane dadalane sakehe kang tuan bendoni ingatase wong iku kabeh liyane dadalane sakehe wong kang tuan sasaraken kabeh

> etc. This plural form with the *yā’* and the *nūn* (sc. *ʿālamīn*) is used to denote, predominantly, cognizant beings (*ūlū ʿilm*). The expression [*ʿālamīn*] relates to [the term] “sign” (*ʿalāma*), since it is an indication of the One that created it.[31]

Furthermore, the translation of Q 1:3 showcases an interesting fact, namely that all of the listed Javanese translations contain a feature that is absent in the *Jalālayn*’s

commentary on this verse, which reads as follows: *al-Raḥmān al-raḥīm: ay dhī al-raḥma wa-hiya irādat al-khayr li-ahlihi* ("The Compassionate, the Merciful: that is to say, the One who possesses 'mercy', which means to want what is good for those who deserve it"). In the Javanese translations, glosses for two of God's attributes are attached: *al-raḥmān* is rendered as *kang murah ing dunya* ("the Compassionate in the earthly life"), and *al-raḥīm* is translated as *kang asih ing akherat* ("the Merciful in the hereafter"). Since these additions are absent from the interpretation of the verse given in the *Jalālayn*, we therefore need to look to other Arabic commentaries that were popular in Banten and in Southeast Asia in general during that period, namely *Tafsīr al-Baghawī*, *Tafsīr al-Khāzin* and *Tafsīr al-Bayḍāwī*. It appears most likely that the explanation found in the Javanese translations was taken from *Tafsīr al-Bayḍāwī*,[32] which contains a similar added explanatory phrase that reads as follows: *Qīla yā raḥmān al-dunyā li-annahu yuʿammu al-muʾmin waʾl-kāfir wa-raḥīm al-ākhira li-annahu yukhaṣṣu al-muʾmin* ("It is said, 'the Compassionate in the earthly life' because it is generally given to the believer and the unbeliever, and 'the Merciful in the hereafter' because this is restricted to the believer"). In addition to occurring in the Javanese translations studied here, we can find the same elements in two Malay translations of the Qurʾan, *Tarjumān* and *SMS Malay Tafsir*, both of which include similar glosses for the words *al-raḥmān* and *al-raḥīm*. It is also worth noting that while this pattern seems to have been a common feature among both Malay and Javanese Qurʾan translations from pre-modern Indonesia, we no longer find it in modern translations such as those by Mahmud Yunus (d. 1982) and Hasby Ash-Shiddieqy (d. 1975) or in the state translation, *Al-Qurʾan dan Terjemahnya*. The reason this pattern has changed in modern Indonesian Qurʾan translation warrants further research.

Another interesting feature of the Javanese translations of the *Fātiḥa* is the way that Q 1:4 is interpreted. As indicated in Table 1.1, the Javanese translator usually translates the word *mālik* (or *malik* based on different systems of Qurʾanic readings) with *ratu*, which has slightly different meanings in Malay/Indonesian and Javanese. The *Tarjumān al-mustafīd*, a complete Malay commentary from late seventeenth-century Aceh, uses the word *raja* (king) to translate *mālik* in this verse.[33] However, in Javanese, the word *ratu* refers to "the one who reigns", which can be either a king or a queen.[34] In Javanese culture, women are traditionally seen as holding the source of power (*kesekten* or *sakti*), both as human and as spiritual beings, a concept that has been developed in both Hindu and Islamic metaphysics in the region.[35] In Javanese cosmology the existence of a *ratu* in the visible world, such as a king at court, in parallel with one in the unseen one (*ratu kidul*), creates balance in life. We therefore suggest that the choice of the word *ratu* to translate the Arabic word *malik* in Q 1:3 might indicate an inclusion of the Javanese concept of women as the source of magical power.

The translation of Q 1:6 and 7 in MS Qurʾan A.54 and other Javanese translations of the Qurʾan listed previously again follows the same pattern, a pattern that does not conform to that found in the *Jalālayn* in all ways. One example of this is in the way they translate the words *al-maghḍūb* and *al-ḍāllīn* in Q 1:7, which they give more generally as *wong kang tuan bendoni* ("the person The Lord is angry with") and *wong kang sasar iku* ("those who are astray"), respectively. In contrast to the

Javanese translations, two Malay works (the *Tarjumān* and the *SMS Malay Tafsir*) give glosses that correspond to those in the *Jalālayn* and state that these words refer to the Jews and the Christians. Meanwhile, we do not find a single Javanese translation in Table 1.1 that mentions religious groups in their glosses of either word.

Broadening the scope

In this section, we discuss a strong tendency by the copyist of MS Qurʾan A.54 to disagree with the *Jalālayn* in the translation of certain Qurʾanic phrases or words. Often, the copyist seems to have chosen words that include a broader scope of meanings in his translations in places where the *Jalālayn* provides more specific meanings. Looking at the copyist's strategies in translation, we have identified a device utilized to widen the scope, namely the use of the expressions *sakehe* ("all") and *wong iku kabeh* ("all the people"), which sometimes lead to disagreement with the *Jalālayn*. While the copyist of MS Qurʾan A.54 used these expressions to widen the meaning of certain words in order to expand their message to a more general level of applicability, the *Jalālayn* has strong tendencies to limit the meaning of words to specific groups of people or events in the prophet's lifetime in seventh-century Arabia. One clear example of this can be seen in the way that the copyist of MS Qurʾan A.54 translated the plural word *al-nās* ("humans") and the clause *alladhīna kafarū* ("those who did not believe/were unbelievers"), as can be seen in their translation of Q 2:6. In the *Jalālayn*, we find this verse explained thus: *Inna lladhīna kafarū, ka-Abī Jahal wa-Abī Lahab wa-naḥwihimā* ("As for the disbelievers, the likes of Abū Jahl, Abū Lahab and such"). Based on this gloss, it is clear that the *Jalālayn* intended to connect this verse to the context of seventh-century Arabia, identifying the unbelievers as specific opponents of the prophet such as Abū Jahal, Abū Lahab and the like. The copyist of MS Qurʾan A.54, however, widened the scope of this phrase to include all unbelievers by presenting the translation as follows: *Satuhune sakehe kang kafir wong iku kabeh pada ingatase wong iku kabeh* ("As for all those who reject, they are the same among all the people"). Here the term *sakehe* and the phrase *wong iku kabeh*, are used to broaden the applicability of the phrase.

Another example can be found in the translation of Q 2:13. The verse and its gloss in the *Jalālayn* are as follows: *Wa-idhā qīla lahum āminū ka-mā āmana al-nās, aṣḥāb al-nabī* ("When it is said to them, 'Believe as the people believe', that is, as the Companions of the Prophet [believe]"). The copyist of MS Qurʾan A.54 translated the phrase as follows: *Lan tatkala ing ucapken wong iku kabeh percayaha sira kabeh kaya kang percaya sakehe menusa* ("And when it was said to all the people: Believe all the people as all humans believe"). Again, the words *sakehe* and *wong iku kabeh* are utilized to convey a more general meaning than the one found in the *Jalālayn*, which interprets the word *al-nās* as referring only to the companions of the prophet.

A final example of this "generalizing" tendency can be seen in the way that the word *al-nās* is rendered in the translation of Q 2:21 (*yā ayyuhā l-nās uʿbudū rabbakum alladhī khalaqakum*) provided in MS Qurʾan A.54, which reads as follows: *Hai sakehe menusa anembaha sira kabeh ing pengeranira kabeh kang, endadekaken*

iya ing sira kabeh ("O ye all humans, worship all of you your God who created all of you"). As with the previous example given here of the translation of *al-nās*, the copyist of MS Qurʾan A.54 utilized the word *sakehe* to give this verse a general meaning. Meanwhile, the *Jalālayn* attached a gloss that clearly identifies the addressees as the seventh-century Meccans.

Between Qurʾanic Arabic and Javanese: ways to bridge the gap

MS Qurʾan A.54 also uses various strategies that are meant to help Javanese readers understand the source text. In the Javanese textual tradition, Ricci has identified one such device: *tegese* or *tegesipun* (noun: meaning), which is usually used by Javanese authors to connect quotations in the source text to their Javanese translations, comparable to *artinya* in Malay. Ricci suggests that use of the word *tegese* appears to be a very common device in Islamic Javanese texts. It enables quoted chunks of the Arabic text to be inserted into the Javanese commentary while making it clear to the readers that the Arabic text is the source text, as opposed to a loanword.[36] Our examination of selected translations found in MS Qurʾan A.54 shows that devices such as *tegese* function as an opening word to which the translator can add glosses taken from sources like the *Jalālayn* or from his own store of knowledge. These explanations can be specific names, descriptions of events or concepts of belief, as we will discuss later. Aside from the word *tegese*, we also identified some other devices used in MS Qurʾan A.54 that fulfil the same function: *yakni* (a Malay word derived from the Arabic *yaʿnī*) and *iya iku* (that is), both words having the same meaning as the word *tegese*.

The word *tegese* or *tegesipun* is thus commonly used by the author as a bridge to an explanation placed directly after the words that follow it. Once the explanation has been presented, the sentence usually ends with a full stop. Based on our analysis of selected parts of the translation in MS Qurʾan A.54, we assume that this device was used whenever the copyist intended to give a detailed explanation consisting of three words or more. However, in a few cases this device is used to give a straightforward explanation in one or two words only. We suggest that the word *tegese* seems to function as an introductory word for presenting additional explanations on the running translation text that functions to keep the readers' attention on the source text. It allows the copyist of MS Qurʾan A.54 to facilitate the process of understanding the meaning of the Qurʾan for Javanese readers whose grasp of Arabic is limited. The use of this device in MS Qurʾan A.54 therefore signifies the importance of those in charge of crafting the text being present "inside the text" in some sections, playing the role of commentator. In this connection, a few examples where this device is used to present a quick explanation can be found, as in the translation of Q 2:59: *maka anurunaken isun ingatasing sakehing wong kang aniyaya siksa tegese tha'un saking* langit ("So We sent down on all those who transgressed a punishment, *that is* a plague, from the skies"). Here, the running translation is interrupted by the copyist's intention to explain what *siksa* means, and the word *tegese* signifies a moment when the interpretative presence of the translator becomes more obvious inside

the translation. We also find this device being used in the translation of Qurʾanic passages that contain stories, where the flow of the story seems to be interrupted because of the translator's intention to present a quick explanation. An example of this is can be found in the presentation of the story of Pharaoh and the Prophet Moses in the Q 2:49, where the translator gives the following: *Lan tatkala anyelamataken isu ing sira kabeh tegese ing bapaira kabeh saking keluarga Fir'aun* ("and when I saved all of you, *that is* all of your ancestors, from the people of the Pharaoh"). Here, the flow of the Qurʾanic story is paused when the copyist of MS Qurʾan A.54 inserts the word *tegese* to explain exactly who is intended by the reference to *sira kabeh* (all of you).

In addition to the word *tegese*, there is another device, *iya iku*, that is commonly found in the Javanese translation in MS Qurʾan A.54. This word equals *ayy* in Arabic (English: "namely" or "that is") and performs a similar function to the word *tegese*. In MS Qurʾan A.54, *iya iku* seems to be commonly used in order to present a straightforward or instant explanation in the running translation. In Table 1.2**,** we attach one example of the use of the device *iya iku* in the running translation of Q 2:4.

As indicated in Table 1.2, using the word *iya iku* often allows the translator to add details such as the names of things. The translation of Q 2:4 also contains the word *tegese*, which leads us to identify the different functions of both devices. In this case, the word *tegese* implies the intention of the copyist to present an explanatory statement taken from another source or based on his point of view whereas *iya iku* is used for one- or two-word clarifications. In some cases, we also find *iya iku* becoming subordinate to a gloss beginning with *tegese*. This is the case with the translation of Q 2:3 (Table 1.3) where the copyist of MS Qurʾan A.54 seems to have provided a gloss taken from the *Jalālayn*.

Table 1.2 Translation of Q 2:4

Qurʾanic text	wa'lladhīna yuʾminūna bi-mā unzila ilayka wa-mā unzila min qablika wa-bi 'l-ākhirati hum yuʾminūn
Jalālayn in English	And those who believe in what has been revealed to you, namely, the Qurʾan; and what was revealed before you, that is, the Torah, the Gospel and other [scriptures]; and of the Hereafter, they are certain, that is, they know [it is real]
A.54	Lan wong kang angestokaken kabeh iku ing kang tinurunaken maring sira ya Muhammad iya iku Qurʾan, lan kang tinurunaken saking sedurungira ya Muhammad iya iku kitab Tawrah lan Injil lan liyan saking karone lan ing akherat wong iku kabeh angeweruhi kabeh iku tegese angeweruhi wong iku kabeh ing sakehing hal akherat iku sakabehe sebenere
Translation	And those who believe all of what has been revealed to you, Muhammad, that is the Qurʾan, and what has been revealed before you, Muhammad, that is the Torah and the Gospel, and other than both [of these], and the hereafter, all the people know all of those, that is all of those people know about everything in the hereafter, all of them correctly.

Table 1.3 Translation of Q 2:3

Qurʾanic text	alladhīna yuʾminūna bi'l-ghaybi wa-yuqīmūna l-ṣalāta wa-mimmā razaqnāhum yunfiqūna
Jalālayn in English	Those who believe in, that is, who accept the truth of, the Unseen, what is hidden from them of the Resurrection, Paradise and the Fire; and maintain the prayer, that is to say, who perform it giving it its proper due; and of what We have provided them, that is, of what we have bestowed upon them, expend, in obedience to God.
Javanese	Wong kang angestukaken kabeh iku, ing kang ghaib-ghaib lan kang anjenengaken kabeh iku ing shalat lan saking kang sun rejekikaken ing kabeh iku, anafkahaken kabeh iku ing angebekti ing Allah tegese wong kang awedi ing Allah iku iya iku wong kang apercaya ingkang ghaib kayak tangi saking kubur lan apercaya ing sawarga lan naraka lan anjenengaken shalat lan amalan dakaken ing barang kang sinungan dening Allah ing dalem arah kebecikan
Translation	Those who believe all of those things, the unseen, and all who are steadfast in prayer and from what I have provided for all of them, all of the people who spend on behalf of God, that is, those who fear God, are those who believe in the unseen [things] such as resurrection from death, and believe in the heavens and the hells and are steadfast in prayer, and spend what has been given by God in the pursuit of virtue.

Last but not least, we were able to identify another device, *yakni*, which is a loanword that is used in Malay but originates from Arabic. The use of this word in a Javanese text is rather uncommon, as it can be replaced entirely by the previously mentioned Javanese expressions, *tegese* and *iya iku*. This implies that the copyist may have lapsed into Arabic while translating the Qurʾan into Javanese. *Yakni* (ar. *yaʿnī*, "that is") is found in the translation of Q 2:27: *Lan engrusak wongiku kabeh ing dalem bumi yakni kelawan agawe maksiyat lan lembat saking agawe iman* ("and all the people who do mischief on earth, that is, wrongdoings and being slow to believe"). The insertion of this word is one indicator that the copyist had a strong grasp of Arabic and that the project was conducted by a person well trained in Islamic studies and Arabic who occupied a high position in the Banten sultanate.

Glosses in the translation of the Qurʾan

There are numerous glosses inserted into the translation in MS Qurʾan A.54, especially in sections dealing with the presentation of stories found in the Qurʾan. Our examination of selected verses in *juzʾ* 1 reveals that the glosses in MS Qurʾan A.54 were mainly taken from the *Jalālayn*, showing that the copyist of MS Qurʾan A.54 always had this work with him while working on the project. We can easily identify glosses that the copyist took from the *Jalālayn* and in a few cases from other sources. Here, we provide two examples of the ways in which the copyist of MS Qurʾan A.54 presents a more detailed story than the Qurʾanic text does.

The first example is the copyists' translation of Q 2:30, which deals with the creation of humankind and God's intention to appoint man as His vicegerent on Earth *(khalīfa fī ʾl-arḍ)*. The *Jalālayn* gives a rather detailed explanation of the creatures that previously occupied the earth but did not survive due to the bloody conflicts that broke out among them *(wa-yasfiku ʾl-dimā')*. What is of interest to us here is the way that the copyist of MS Qurʾan A.54 presented additional explanations in the translation of this verse (Q 2:30), one of them being an addition that is clearly taken from the *Jalālayn* and which explains the phrase *wa-yasfiku ʾl-dimāʾ* as follows: *yuriquhā biʾl-qatl ka-mā faʿala banū l-jān wa-kānū fīhā fa-lammā afsadū arsala Allāh ʿalayhim al-malāʾika fa-ṭaradūhum ilā l-jazāʾir waʾl-jibāl* ("and shed blood, spilling it through killing, just as the progeny of the jinn did, for they used to inhabit it, but when they became corrupted God sent down the angels against them and they were driven away to islands and into the mountains").

In this context, it is worth mentioning an explanation added by the copyist of MS Qurʾan A.54 to the statement about predecessors of humankind that the *Jalālayn* calls "the progeny of the jinn" *(banū al-jānn)*. The copyist of MS Qurʾan A.54 terms them *jan manijan* in Javanese, which led us to try and trace the use of this word among Javanese speakers who have a background in studying the Javanese Islamic tradition. Thanks to a senior colleague who is a native speaker of Cirebon-Javanese and has in-depth experience of the learning tradition, we learned that in Cirebon, people usually used the expression *jan manijan* to identify the jinn who lived before the lifetime of the first created human, that is, the ancestors of the jinn. He said that it was common to associate those who misbehaved with the descendants of the jinn. However, this usage is, he says, uncommon today, such that the use of this word in certain socio-linguistic contexts warrants further investigation.

The second example of the insertion of a gloss into MS Qurʾan A.54 can be found in the translation of Q 2:65, which tells the story of the people of Ayla/Eilat. As with previous examples, the *Jalālayn* text in English is included in Table 1.4, so as to allow comparison with the Javanese translation of this verse found in MS Qurʾan A.54.

It is clear that in translating this verse the copyist of MS Qurʾan A.54 referred to the *Jalālayn*. He nevertheless added further information, stating that this happened in the lifetime of the prophet Dāwūd. This information is absent from the *Jalālayn* but is mentioned in *Tafsīr al-Bayḍāwī*.

Concluding remarks

In this chapter, we have examined patterns of Javanese translation in the eighteenth-century Banten MS Qurʾan A.54. This work was used to highlight the way the Qurʾan had been translated into Javanese in its entirety as early as the eighteenth century, assuming that the lost two *juzʾ* (*juzʾ* 15 and 16) must have still been present in the document when it was in use in the late eighteenth or early nineteenth century. The first conclusion we can reach is that patterns and strategies of

Table 1.4 Translation of Q 2:65

Qurʾanic text	wa-laqad ʿalimtumu lladhīna ʿtadaw minkum fī abti fa-qulnā lahum kūnū qiradatan khāsiʾīn
Jalālayn in English	And verily (wa-la-qad: the lām is for oaths) you know that there were those among you who transgressed, violated, the Sabbath, by fishing, when We had forbidden you to do so – these were the inhabitants of Eilat – and We said to them, "Be apes, despised!", rejected, and they became so: they died three days later.
A.54	Lan demi Allah yekti setuhune wus angeweruhi sira kabeh ing sakehe kang angliwat had saking sira kabeh ing dina sabtu kelawan angalap iwak lan setuhune wus anyegah isun ing wongiku kabeh saking angalap iwak lan wongiku kabeh wong kang anduweni Negeri Aylah ing dalem zamane Nabi Dawud ʻalayhis salam maka angucap isun ing wong iku kabeh dadiya sira kabeh monyet kang adoh saking rahmat Allah lan mati wongiku kabeh sawusing telung dina.
Translation	And by God [He] truly knows all of you, to all of those who transgressed from all of you in the day of Sabbath by fishing, and truly I had forbidden all of them to fish, and all of them who inhabited the country of Ayla in the period of the prophet David, peace be upon him. Then, I said to all of them, "Be all of you apes that are far from God's Mercy." And all of them died three days later.

translation that were examined in this chapter reveal its dependence on the *Jalālayn* as a main reference, confirming that Qurʾanic exegetical activities in Javanese in the early phase followed trends that occurred in Qurʾanic exegetical activities elsewhere in the Malay-Indonesian world. The interlinear Javanese translation found in MS Qurʾan A.54 from the eighteenth-century Banten shows close connections to the *Jalālayn* and confirms the pre-eminent influence of this work in Islamic circles from the compilation of the *Tarjumān* in late seventeenth-century Aceh onwards, especially among those who spoke in Malay and Javanese. However, despite its dominant role as the main reference for MS Qurʾan A.54, we are still able to identify a few additional explanations taken from other Arabic commentaries, as elaborated upon previously.

By looking at MS Qurʾan A.54 more closely, we also find that some phrases indicate the presence of meanings produced by the copyist inserting his own points of view rather than just transmitting them from the *Jalālayn* to the Javanese readers. Furthermore, the copyist seems to have also negotiated between the commentaries on certain Qurʾanic passages as it appears in the *Jalālayn* and the meaning that he wanted to represent in his translation. In this regard, we find that the copyist of MS Qurʾan A.54 presented certain words or phrases as conveying a broader meaning than the *Jalālayn*, rather than linking them to specific circumstances as the *Jalālayn* does.

At the outset, we highlighted the role of Javanese as a medium of communication and of public services, on the basis of studies of extant documents from the seventeenth- and eighteenth-century Banten religious courts. Given this, it seems likely that MS Qurʾan A.54 was produced to target a wide audience that used Javanese as a language for daily conversation. This distinguishes MS Qurʾan A.54 from other Banten Qurʾans (that is, A. 51 and W.277) which contain Malay interlinear translations. On the basis of previous work by Nurtawab, we can posit that the latter two Qurʾans were possibly used by those who came from other parts of the archipelago and did not speak Javanese.[37]

It is also worthwhile to highlight the ways in which Qurʾanic translations from Banten were written using different techniques adopted from earlier translations such the *Tarjumān* of seventeenth-century Aceh and the *SMS Malay Tafsir* of Mindanao, which allowed the copyist to allocate more Javanese words to the translation of the Qurʾanic texts, which were written in gaps between the Arabic verses. In many parts of MS Qurʾan A.54, we find that the copyist allocated more lines to their translation than to the Qurʾanic text, and this indicates that this work might be the result of a project where the copyist set out to provide Javanese readers with a comprehensive translation of the Qurʾan, including explanatory comments. The examination of the translations found in the Qurʾan manuscript should be interpreted as the authors' or translators' attempts at spreading the meaning of the Qurʾanic text to segments of their societies who did not have knowledge of Arabic. This can in turn guide us to better understand the vibrant exegetical tradition of the time and the mechanisms through which the Qurʾan coexisted with other cultural understandings and interpretations in a non-Arabic Muslim public sphere.

In a broader context, the Banten Qurʾan project inevitably required a constant, and plentiful, supply of paper and ink. As these were expensive and difficult to find prior to the mass use of the printing press in modern Indonesia, those who gained access to these commodities must have had a privileged social status in society. This lack of access to written materials led to the development of a strong oral tradition in Islamic intellectual transmission, and this was how the majority of believers accessed the holy text. For this reason, the examination of Qurʾan manuscripts and associated aspects such as, for example, exegetical activities, Qurʾanic readings, calligraphy and illuminations, greatly contribute to understanding the ways in which religious texts received social acceptance in the past, because the written texts we have can be read as expressing ideas and concepts that had become established through oral culture. Once they were socially accepted and regularly used in daily life, certain forms of ideology were then constructed and reproduced in written texts. In this context, the use of the *Jalālayn* as a main reference for the purpose of pedagogy and exegetical activity up to the present day confirms the social acceptability of this work in the Indonesian Islamic sphere.

Notes

1 It is hard to imagine how we would have been able to complete this chapter without support from many colleagues. Here, we specifically express grateful thanks to Yasin

Isma'il, Ali Akbar, Salfia Rahmawati, R. Adi Deswijaya and Ahmad Thobari for fruitful discussions on the oral Islamic tradition in Cirebon, Banten Qurʾan manuscripts, the concept of power in Javanese literature, aspects of Javanese grammar and traditional Islamic learning in Tangerang of Banten Province, respectively. Thanks are also due to Umi Hani for her assistance in identifying difficult Javanese words and to the staff of the National Library of the Republic of Indonesia for their assistance. We are also grateful to Professor Johanna Pink for her comments and suggestions. However, we take responsibility for all shortcomings and weaknesses that might be found in this chapter.

2 R. Friederich and L. W. C. van den Berg, *Codicum arabicorum in bibliotheca societas artium et scientiarum quae Bataviae floret asservatorum Catalogum* (Batavia: Bruining et Wijt, 1873), 63–71. *Pegon* refers to a modified Arabic script used to write in Javanese – and in Sundanese and Madurese as well – that has been commonly used in Java and Madura, especially in the Islamic educational *pesantren* milieu, as opposed to the Javanese script that was generally used in the milieu of the Javanese courts of Yogyakarta and Surakarta.

3 Studies on these Qurʾans with Malay interlinear translations can be found in the author's previous work. See Ervan Nurtawab, "Qur'anic Readings and Malay Translations in Eighteenth-Century Banten Qur'ans A.51 and W.277", *Indonesia and the Malay World* 48, no. 141 (2020), 169–189.

4 Haarlem: Joh. Enschedé en Zonen, 1913. This publication was based on his doctoral dissertation at the Leiden University in 1913. For the purpose of study, we used its translation version in Indonesian entitled *Tinjauan Kritis tentang Sajarah Banten: Sumbangan bagi Pengenalan Sifat-Sifat Penulisan Sejarah Jawa* (Jakarta: Djambatan, 1983).

5 Martin van Bruinessen, "Shari'a Court, *tarekat* and *pesantren*: Religious Institutions in the Banten Sultanate", *Archipel* 50 (1995), 165–199.

6 Titik Pudjiastuti, *Perang, Dagang, Persahabatan: Surat-surat Sultan Banten* (Jakarta: Yayasan Obor Indonesia, 2007).

7 Ayang Utriza Yakin, "The Register of the *qāḍī* Court 'Kyahi Pĕqih Najmuddin' of the Sultanate of Bantĕn, 1754–1756 CE", *Studia Islamika* 22, no. 3 (2015), 443–486; and "Undhang-Undhang Bantĕn: A Seventeenth- to Eighteenth-Century Legal Compilation from the *qāḍī* Court of the Sultanate of Bantĕn", *Indonesia and the Malay World* 44, no. 130 (2016), 365–388.

8 Ade Fakih Kurniawan, *The Mystical Thought of 'Abd Allah bin 'Abd al-Qahhar al-Bantani: An Analysis of the Mashahid al-nasik fi maqamat al-salik* (MA thesis, Jakarta: Paramadina University, 2011).

9 Annabel Teh Gallop and Ali Akbar, "The Art of the Qurʾān in Banten: Calligraphy and illumination", *Archipel* 72 (2006), 95–156.

10 Oman Fathurahman, "A New Light on the Sufi Network of Mindanao (Philippines)", *Indonesia and the Malay World* 47, no. 137 (2019), 108–124.

11 Friederich and van den Berg, *Codicum arabicorum*, 63–71.

12 Nurtawab, "Qur'anic Readings and Malay Translations", 169–189.

13 The first evidence of this tafsir being in use dates to late seventeenth-century Aceh. See Peter G. Riddell, *'Abd al-Raʾūf al-Singkili's Tarjumān al-Mustafīd: A Critical Study of His Treatment of juz' 16* (PhD thesis, Canberra: Australian National University, 1984).

14 Nurtawab, "Qurʾanic Readings and Malay Translations", 9.

15 For the description of the gaps, see Gallop and Akbar, "The Art of the Qurʾān in Banten", 138.

16 Ibid.

17 Pudjiastuti, *Perang, Dagang, Persahabatan*, 215–217; see also Stuart Robson, *Working Paper 118: From Malay to Indonesian: The Genesis of a National Language* (Clayton: Monash University Press, 2002), 20.

18 Yakin, "The Register of the *qāḍī* Court", 443–486; and "Undhang-Undhang Bantĕn", 365–388.

19 Robson, *From Malay to Indonesian*, 19–20.
20 Friederich and van den Berg, *Codicum arabicorum*, 66–68.
21 Robson, *From Malay to Indonesian*, 13.
22 Hoesein Djajadiningrat, *Tinjauan Kritis tentang Sajarah Banten: Sumbangan bagi Pengenalan Sifat-Sifat Penulisan Sejarah Jawa* (Jakarta: Djambatan, 1983).
23 Friederich and van den Berg, *Codicum arabicorum*, 64–65; Gallop and Akbar, "The Art of the Qurʾān in Banten", 138.
24 Ervan Nurtawab, "Qurʾānic Translations in Malay, Javanese and Sundanese: A Commentary or Substitution?", in *The Qurʾān in the Malay-Indonesian World: Context and Interpretation*, eds. Majid Daneshgar, Peter Riddell, and Andrew Rippin (London: Routledge, 2016), 39–57; and "The Malay *tafsīr* in the Sheik Muhammad Said Collection in Marawi City, Lanao del Sur, Philippines", in *The Library of an Islamic Scholar of Mindanao: The Collection of Sheik Muhammad Said bin Imam sa Bayang at the al-Imam As-Sadiq (AS) Library, Marawi City, Philippines: An Annotated Catalogue with Essays*, eds. Oman Fathurahman et al. (Tokyo: Institute of Asian. African, and Middle Eastern Studies, Sophia University, 2019), 129–154.
25 van Bruinessen, "Shari'a Court, *tarekat* and *pesantren*", 182.
26 Ronit Ricci, "Story, Sentence and Single Word: Translation Paradigms in Javanese and Malay Islamic Literature", in *A Companion to Translation Studies*, eds. Sandra Bermann and Catherine Porter (West Sussex: Wiley Blackwell, 2014), 543–556.
27 See Ricci's review of Johns' work on Burhanpuri's *Tuḥfa*, which she categorizes as representing the holistic translation type, in Ricci, "Story, Sentence and Single Word", 545–550.
28 Nurtawab, "Qurʾānic Translations in Malay, Javanese and Sundanese", 46–49.
29 The translation of this *sūra* in the *Jalālayn* was authored by the first author to work on it, Jalāl al-Dīn al-Maḥallī, who started his commentary from Sūrat al-Kahf. After having reached the end of the Qur'an, he then went back to the beginning and worked on Sūrat al-Fātiḥa. However, he passed away before being able to continue his work beyond this point. His disciple, Jalāl al-Dīn al-Suyūṭi, then acted as the second author, completing the commentary on the rest of the chapters.
30 Jalāl al-Dīn al-Maḥallī and Jalāl al-Dīn al-Suyūṭī, *Tafsīr al-Qurʾān al-ʿaẓīm* (Indonesia: Dār Iḥyāʾ al-Kutub al-ʿArabiyya, n.d.), 513.
31 The English translations of the *Jalālayn* in this paper are based on Feras Hamza's translation of the *Jalālayn*. For the translation of Q 1:2, see Jalāl al-Dīn al-Maḥallī and Jalāl al-Dīn al-Suyūṭī, *Tafsīr al-Jalālayn*, trans. Feras Hamza (Amman: Royal Aal al-Bayt Institute for Islamic Thought, 2007), 1.
32 Nāṣir al-Dīn ʿAbd Allāh ibn ʿUmar ibn Muḥammad al-Shīrāzī al-Bayḍāwī, *Anwār al-tanzīl wa-asrār al-taʾwīl* (Beirut: Dār Iḥyāʾ al-Turāth al-ʿArabī, n.d.), 27.
33 ʿAbd al-Raʾūf ibn ʿAlī al-Fanṣūrī, *Tarjumān al-mustafīd* (Beirut: Dār al-Fikr, 1990), 2.
34 In Mardiwarsito's dictionary, for instance, the sample sentence for this entry is *hana sira ratu sang Parīkṣit ngaran ira* ("there is a ruler named Parikesit"), which does not specify the ruler's gender. See L. Mardiwarsito, *Kamus Jawa Kuna Indonesia* (Ende: Nusa Indah, 1981), 468.
35 Bianca J. Smith and Mark Woodward, "Magico-spiritual Power, Female Sexuality and Ritual Sex in Muslim Java: Unveiling the *kesekten* of Magical Women", *The Australian Journal of Anthropology* 27 (2016), 317–332.
36 Ricci, "Story, Sentence and Single Word", 550.
37 Nurtawab, "Qurʾanic Readings and Malay Translations", 178–181.

Part I

The politics of Qur'an translation

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2 Ahmadiyya translations of the Qur'an in Indonesia

Reception and controversy

Ahmad Najib Burhani

Introduction[1]

The Ahmadiyya is one of the most controversial sectarian groups in contemporary Islam. Established by Mirza Ghulam Ahmad in India in 1889, the Ahmadiyya movement has faced charges of heresy from various religious institutions, such as the Rābiṭat al-'Ālam al-Islāmī (Muslim World League), the Indonesian Council of Ulama (MUI) and the Council of the Islamic Fiqh Academy of the Organization of Islamic Cooperation (OIC). These charges came about because of a number of distinctive beliefs held by the Ahmadiyya, such as their belief that their founder Ghulam Ahmad was a prophet. Furthermore, the Ahmadiyya has also been accused of following a different holy book to other Muslims, namely the Tadhkirah instead of the Qurʾan,[2] an accusation that has been rejected by both the Qadiani and Lahore factions of the Ahmadiyya.[3] In fact, the Ahmadiyya community has been very active in the field of Qurʾan translation and can be seen as pioneering in their endeavors to translate the Qurʾan into a variety of languages.[4] In Indonesia, Ahmadiyya translations are available in several languages, such as Dutch, Malay, Javanese, Sundanese, Balinese and Batakese. In the first half of the twentieth century in particular, these translations were held in high regard and functioned as an important source of knowledge about Islam and its tenets for many Indonesian Muslims who were unable to access the scripture in its original Arabic.[5] However, there are some important differences between Ahmadiyya translations of the Qurʾan and translations by Sunni Muslims that arise from theological differences, and these have often created controversy and incurred the opposition of Sunni Muslims. These theological differences can be seen especially clearly in the disparities in translation of a number of contested verses. This chapter studies the characteristics of Ahmadiyya translations circulating in Indonesia, and their influence on Indonesian Islam, focusing on the following questions: What unique characteristics do the Ahmadiyya translations of the Qurʾan display? Why did Ahmadiyya translations play such a prominent role in Indonesia in the first half of the twentieth century? What was the appeal of these translations to the Indonesian intelligentsia? And finally, what is the contribution of these translations to the study of the Qurʾan in Indonesia?

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Lahore Ahmadiyya movement translations

Historically, there has been much debate in the Islamic world about the permissibility of translating the Qurʾan from its Arabic original.[6] Some ulama have opposed this idea on the basis of the argument of *iʿjāz al-Qur'ān* (the inimitability of the language of the Qurʾan).[7] Others have opposed the idea of Qurʾan translation on the basis of the (less theologically founded) objection that people cannot free themselves from ideological biases and that these will necessarily be transferred into any translation of the sacred text. As has been observed by scholars such as Frans Volker Greifenhagen, translating the Qurʾan is not merely a question of rendering the words of the Qurʾan from Arabic into other languages, it also requires the translator to transmit certain understandings of the Qurʾan, especially when it comes to its more ambiguous verses.[8] It is not surprising, therefore, that an old Italian adage says "the translator is a traitor" (*traduttore traditore*).[9]

Both branches of the Ahmadiyya, the Ahmadiyya Anjuman Isha'at-e-Islam Lahore (AAIIL, often called Lahore Ahmadiyya Movement) and the Ahmadiyya Muslim Jama'at (AMJ, often labelled as Qadiani by opposing Muslims), can be considered pioneers of Qurʾan translation into a number of languages, particularly with regard to the "Western" form of translation – that is, adopting a format that uses columns of parallel Arabic source text and translation, often accompanied by footnotes, rather than interlinear text and translation and/or commentary.[10] For this religious movement, the translation of the Qurʾan is consciously undertaken as a way to implement the doctrine of waging *jihād bi'l-qalam* ("jihad of the pen").[11] This has been clearly stated by Muhammad Ali, the president of the Lahore Ahmadiyya, who took the view that "The real objective of our movement is the propagation of Islam, and in that work the propagation of the Holy Quran holds the foremost place".[12]

The main Lahore translation is Muhammad Ali's *The Holy Qur-án: Containing the Arabic Text with English Translation and Commentary*, which was first published by the *Islamic Review* office in Woking, London, in 1917.[13] This is the work on which all of the AAIIL's translations into other languages is based. The idea for this translation came about in 1907, a year before Mirza Ghulam Ahmad, the founder of the Ahmadiyya movement, passed away, but the process of translation did not start until in 1909, and it took seven years to finish.[14] After the Ahmadiyya split into two branches in 1914, its author, Muhammad Ali, served as the president of the AAIIL, known as the Lahore Ahmadiyya, until his death in 1951.

Muhammad Ali's *The holy Qur-án* has some distinctive characteristics when compared to other translations of the Qurʾan. Among the most notable of these are the following five aspects: First, it tries to demonstrate compatibility between the holy book and modern sciences. Second, it underlines the completeness of the Qurʾan. Third, it opposes the idea of *nāsikh* (abrograting) and *mansūkh* (abrogated) verses of the Qurʾan. Fourth, it contains a detailed and lengthy preface.[15] Fifth, it introduces new ideas about Jesus and his crucifixion. In the following I will briefly address two of these aspects: the first and the fifth.[16]

When it comes to translating Qurʾanic verses relating to miracles, Muhammad Ali tries to show that "the Word of God" (revelation) and "the Work of God" (creation) do not contradict each other.[17] One way of doing this is by opting for an allegorical translation whenever the Qurʾan mentions miracles.[18] Examples of this can be seen in his treatment of the stories of Solomon, Moses and Joseph. Traditionally, Muslim exegetes or translators render the story of the dialogue between the prophet Solomon and the ants in Q 27:16–44 literally, implying that Solomon can understand the language of ants. In contrast to this traditional understanding, Ali translates Q 27:18 as "Until when they came to the valley of the Naml, a Namlite said: O Naml, enter your houses, (lest) Solomon and his hosts crush you, while they know not". For Ali, *Naml* is a proper noun and *Namla* is the name of a tribe, which is why he capitalizes the word: in his reading of the Qurʾanic text, this verse does not talk about the ability of Solomon to understand the language of an animal. Likewise, in the story of Solomon's encounter with the Queen of Sheba, the *ʿifrīt* (a type of jinn) mentioned in Q 27:39 is not understood to be a magical spirit, but "one of the Amalekites [a mountain tribe], who were men of large stature".[19] In a third example of this process, in a story where Moses strikes the rock and water surges forth (Q 2:60), Muhammad Ali translates *iḍrib bi ʿaṣāk al-ḥajara* as "Seek with your staff a way into the mountain", while in other translations, such as Yusuf Ali, that phrase is usually translated as "strike the rock with thy staff".[20] Likewise, in the story of Joseph (Q 12:93), it is usually understood that Joseph gives his shirt to his brother and instructs him to "cast it over the face of my father; he will become seeing",[21] but Muhammad Ali translates this verse differently, as "Take this my shirt and cast it before my father, he will come to know".

Concerning the fifth aspect listed previously, the crucifixion and death of Jesus, Muhammad Ali's translation conveys the distinctive perspective of the Ahmadiyya. The Ahmadiyya do not accord with the Christian belief that Jesus died on the cross and ascended bodily to heaven, nor do they follow the common Muslim belief that Jesus was elevated physically to heaven, where he has remained next to God ever since. Instead, according to the Ahmadiyya, Jesus was crucified, but rather than dying on the cross, he was taken down and saved by his disciples. After his wound was healed by the ointment of Jesus (*marham-i Isa*), he travelled to the East and died a natural death at the age of 120 in Kashmir. Thus, when translating Q 4:157–159, Muhammad Ali writes:

> And their saying: Surely we have killed the Messiah, Jesus son of Mary, the apostle of Allah; and they did not kill him nor did they crucify him, but (the matter) was made dubious to them, and most surely those who differ therein are only in a doubt about it; they have no knowledge respecting it, but only follow a conjecture, and they *know it* [italics in original] not for sure; Nay! Allah exalted him in His presence; and Allah is Mighty, Wise. And there is not one of the followers of the Book but most certainly believes in this before his death; and on the day of Resurrection he shall be a witness against them.[22]

Ahmadiyya Muslim Jama'at translations

There are two famous English translations of the Qurʾan published by the AMJ, namely Sher Ali's *The Holy Qur'ān: Arabic Text and English Translation* and Muhammad Zafrullah Khan's *The Quran: The Eternal Revelation Vouchsafed to Muhammad, the Seal of the Prophets*.[23] These English translations have been used as the basis for Ahmadiyya translations into other languages, including Indonesian, Javanese, Batakese and Balinese. Sher Ali's *The Holy Qur'an* was published in 1955 under the auspices of the second caliph of the Ahmadiyya, Mirza Bashiruddin Mahmud Ahmad, but a draft of the first part of this translation first appeared in 1915. Zafrullah Khan's *The Quran* was originally published in 1971.[24] Further to Sher Ali's and Zafrullah Khan's translations, the AMJ has also produced a five-volume commentary on the Qurʾan entitled *The Holy Qur'ān: Arabic Text with English Translation & Commentary*, authored by Malik Ghulām Farīd and published under the auspices of Hadrat Mirza Masroor Ahmad.

The AMJ translations of the Qurʾan have some similarities with the translation by Muhammad Ali, such as its stance towards Jesus' death. However, it is noticeable that both Sher Ali and Zafrullah Khan put even more emphasis on the Ahmadiyya's particular doctrinal stance on this issue than Ali does. In Muhammad Ali's translation of Q 3:54 (3:55), the verse is rendered as "When Allah said: O Jesus! I will cause *you* to die and exalt *you* in My presence" (italics in original). Sher Ali writes "When Allah said, 'O Jesus, I will cause thee to die *a natural death* and will exalt thee to Myself" (italics in original, the number of the verse in Sher Ali's translation is Q 3:56). In translating Q 4:157–159, Zafrullah Khan, with his free-flowing, or non-literal, translation is even bolder in emphasizing the Ahmadiyya position regarding the death of Jesus.[25] He writes:

> And their saying: We did kill the Messiah, Jesus son of Mary, the Messenger of Allah; whereas they slew him not, nor did they compass his death on the cross, but he was made to appear to them like one crucified to death; and those who have differed in the matter of his having been taken down alive from the cross are certainly in a state of doubt concerning it, they have no definite knowledge about it, but only follow a conjecture; they certainly did not compass his death in the manner they allege; indeed Allah exalted him to Himself, Allah is Mighty Wise, and there is none among the People of the Book but will continue to believe till his death that Jesus died on the cross, and on the Day of Judgment Jesus will bear witness against them.[26]

One of the most obvious differences between the two branches of the Ahmadiyya is their view on the prophethood of Mirza Ghulam Ahmad. As mentioned, the AAIIL only recognizes him as a *mujaddid* (reformer), whereas the AMJ accepts him as a prophet. The translations by Sher Ali, Ghulam Farid and Zafrullah Khan show this distinctive perspective. In translating Q 62:4 ("And among others from among them who have not yet joined them"), for instance, Ghulam Farid adds a footnote mentioning that this verse is proof of the prophecy of Mirza Ghulam Ahmad. He

writes, "Thus the Qurʾan and the *Hadith* both seem to agree that the present verse refers to the Second Advent of the Holy Prophet in the person of the Promised Messiah".[27]

Likewise, the treatment of Q 33:40 (translated by Muhammad Abdel Haleem in accordance with Sunni norms as "Muhammad is not the father of any one of you men; he is God's Messenger and the seal of the prophets: God knows everything") reflects ideological differences over the status of Mirza Ghulam Ahmad. With regard to the meaning of the phrase *khātam al-nabiyyīn* ("the seal of the prophets"), the AAIIL and AMJ do not display significant differences in their literal translations. The concept of *khatm al-nubuwwa* or *khātam al-nabiyyīn*, commonly interpreted by Muslim commentators (*mufassirūn*) as the "last prophet" or the "seal of prophets", is interpreted by the AMJ as referring to the "best prophet" but not necessarily the last one, thereby leaving open the possibility of the coming of another prophet after Muhammad. It is this interpretation that has been used by the AMJ to defend the prophethood of Mirza Ghulam Ahmad. The AMJ believe that no legislative (*tashrīʿī*) prophet will appear after Muhammad but that a non-legislative prophet (*ghayr tashrīʿī*) and "shadowy" (*ẓillī*) or "manifestational" (*burūzī*) prophet was predicted to follow Muhammad, and Ghulam Ahmad is that prophet. Muhammad Ali's translation of Q 33:40 as "Muhammad is not the father of any of your men, but he is the Apostle of Allah and the seal of the prophets" conforms to the Sunni norm, as does Sher Ali's translation of the verse as "Muhammad is not the father of any of your men, but *he is* the Messenger of Allah and the Seal of the prophets". The only difference between these two translations (apart from Ali's use of "Apostle" rather than "Messenger") is that Sher Ali uses the capital S ("Seal") and italics "*he is*", whereas Muhammad Ali uses a small s ("seal") and no italics. However, if we compare the footnotes for this verse provided by Muhammad Ali and the AMJ translator Ghulam Farid, we can observe some ideological differences in their translations. Ghulam Farid emphasizes the idea of "the continuity of prophethood" after Muhammad and "the advent of Prophets", whereas Muhammad Ali emphasizes that "prophethood terminated with the Holy Prophet".[28]

As these examples show, Ahmadiyya translations contain interpretations that are controversial or problematic for non-Ahmadi Muslims. Apart from the Ahmadi interpretation of prophethood and the second coming of the Messiah, the metaphorical or allegorical translation of certain verses by the Ahmadiyya were also regarded as controversial by other Muslim communities. In the next part of this chapter, we will look at the reception of Ahmadiyya translations of the Qurʾan in the Indonesian context.

The distinctiveness of Ahmadiyya translations and their influence

For the Ahmadiyya, the idea of translating the Qurʾan into numerous languages was not so very different from the idea of translating the Gospels and the Bible into native languages as a medium for proselytizing. When Khwaja Kamal-ud-Din, one of the most successful missionaries of the Lahore Ahmadiyya, left India as a missionary to London in 1913, he said, "I am going to conquer Europe by means of

this [Qurʾan]".[29] Those engaged in missionary activities in general tend to use their Holy Book as a weapon to convince people of the truth or falsity of religions.[30] The Qurʾan was used by the Ahmadiyya to demonstrate the superiority of Islam over other religions and the deviation of Christianity from its original teachings, while Christian missionaries utilized the Gospels in a similar manner. However, the project of translating the Qurʾan certainly had other purposes as well. For fellow believers, for instance, translation was intended to display the beauty of Islam and its compatibility with modern science, to offer comprehensible guidance for religious life and to clear the ground for Ahmadiyya beliefs and teachings.

In terms of content, it seems useful to view Ahmadiyya translations in the context of Islamic revivalism. Fazlur Rahman classifies Islamic revivalist movements of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries into four categories: pre-modernist revivalism, modernism, neo-revivalism and neo-modernism.[31] Pre-modernist revivalism was epitomized by Wahhabism with its project of "going back" to the pristine Islam of the seventh century by eradicating various accretions and superstitions attached to Islam. Only this way, the pre-modernist revivalists believed, could Islam regain its supremacy and glory. In contrast to pre-modernist revivalism, modernist Muslims assumed that they could only accomplish a new Golden Age of Islam by absorbing Western technology, sciences and ideas in their entirety. They believed that Islam and the Qurʾan were perfectly compatible with modern sciences and that not a single verse in the Qurʾan contradicted reason. Inheriting the paradigms of pre-modernist revivalism and modernism, neo-revivalist movements believe that Islam and the Qurʾan are far superior to Western ideas and modern innovations. They hold that the Qurʾan predicted new findings and scientific innovations before they were discovered by the West and that Islam offers a better system of education and banking, as well as a better role for women. It is in response to this kind of revivalism that Fazlur Rahman promoted his idea of neo-modernism.[32] For Rahman, none of the three previously mentioned revivalist movements could establish a comprehensive system for Islamic reform, despite their respective claims to provide a complete way of life. In his view, the way they respond to issues tends to be *ad hoc*, apologetic and piecemeal, lacking a systematic and comprehensive methodology.

The Ahmadiyya's religious positions, as reflected in their translation of the Qurʾan, do not strictly accord with Rahman's four categories of revivalist movements. As stated by Rahman himself, these categories are interrelated, and "the precise lines of influence among these movements are not always easy to draw".[33] Thus, the Ahmadiyya's perspective on modern sciences and ideas can be seen as a mixture between modernist and neo-revivalist ideas. Sometimes Ahmadiyya translators emphasize that the Qurʾan is in perfect harmony with modern sciences. For example, Khwaja Kamal-ud-Din, a close friend of Muhammad Ali and a leader of the Lahore Ahmadiyya, maintained that there are no verses in the Qurʾan that contradict science: "No other revealed Book proves their [sic] validity on grounds of logic and reason, while the Qur-an frankly appeals to our reason before it asks us to accept them".[34] In other places, however, the translators also try to show that the Qurʾan is more advanced than the modern sciences and implicitly predicts modern

innovations or scientific achievements. In short, as stated by Ali in his preface to the translation:

> In the Holy Qur'an are found guiding rules for the ordinary man of the world as well as for the philosopher, and for communities in the lowest grade of civilization as well as for the highly civilized nations of the world. Practicability is the keynote of its precepts, and thus the same universality which marks its principles of faith is to be met with in its practical ordinances, suiting as they do the requirements of all ages and nations.[35]

The Ahmadiyya position on sciences and miracles has led some critics accuse them of apologetics. In his translation, Muhammad Ali makes every effort to show that the Qurʾan conforms to modern mindsets, for instance by removing any notion of miracles from the text, for instance by providing allegorical interpretations. The only miracle in the Qurʾan is the Qurʾan itself, specifically its completeness and the absence of discrepancies in its content. In sum, the purpose of Ahmadiyya translations of the Qurʾan is to show that this holy book is eternally true and that it conforms to modern science. This type of translation, which strives to make the Qurʾan compatible with science, mitigated the feeling of defeat felt by some Muslims in the face of the advancement of Western technology and science. It created a space in which Islam was actually more advanced than the Christian or atheist West, as every technological and scientific innovation had already been predicted in the Qurʾan. However, in the long run, this kind of feeling has proven deceptive. Technology and science have continued to progress with tremendous speed in recent years, while the Ahmadiyya reading of the Qurʾan remains largely unchanged. This is perhaps one of several reasons, but a major one, that Ahmadiyya Qurʾan translations have lost their prestige in the Muslim world. Of course, accusations of heresy aimed at the theological beliefs of the Ahmadiyya have also contributed to the decline in popularity of Ahmadiyya translations.

The Ahmadiyya's stance toward modern science is in marked contrast to its stance toward Christianity. In the context of modern science, the Ahmadiyya have adopted a defensive, apologetic approach, whereas in regard to Christianity, they employ an aggressive, polemical approach. The way the Ahmadiyya views Jesus, for instance, directly and overtly contradicts common Christian beliefs. This might be because the Ahmadiyya intend to attack the very core of Christianity, to "break the cross". The Ahmadiyya's combined approaches to Christianity and modern science were exactly what motivated the Muslim intelligentsia in Indonesia at the beginning of the twentieth century to join the Ahmadiyya or to learn about Islam from Ahmadiyya books or missionaries. They created a feeling of superiority and confidence among Muslims. In the face of an aggressive Christian missionary movement in Indonesia alongside the serious threat presented by "materialism",[36] the Ahmadiyya's approach became a weapon – the only weapon – with which the Muslim intelligentsia could defend their faith. In this light, it is worth noting that Christian missionary activities were on Muhammad Ali's mind when he embarked on his project to translate the Qurʾan into English in the first half of the twentieth

century, during a time that the Christian mission in British India was expanding aggressively. When he talks about the absence of discrepancies in the Qurʾan, or comments on the Qurʾan's consistency, he does so in conversation with what is commonly said about the Bible.[37]

The Ahmadiyya and the translation of the Qurʾan in Indonesia

Ahmadiyya translations of the Qurʾan were not the first exegetic works on the Qurʾan to be produced in Indonesian languages, but they were the first translations (as opposed to "commentary") to be available to Indonesians in the modern era.[38] Furthermore, in terms of providing a Qurʾan translation that would be accessible to a wider audience, and not only for pedagogical purposes, Ahmadiyya translations were was groundbreaking and played an important role in the turn to "return to the Qurʾan" (*al-rujūʿ ilā l-Qurʾān*).[39] The following section will address four specific Ahmadiyya translations that have had significant consequences for the discourse on the Qurʾan in Indonesia.

Tjokroaminoto's Indonesian translation

The idea of translating the Qurʾan into the Malay-Indonesian language came up not long after Mirza Wali Ahmad Baig, the first Lahore Ahmadiyya missionary, arrived in Indonesia in 1924. With approval from Haji Fachruddin and Mas Mansur of the Muhammadiyah (the largest modernist movement in Indonesia), H.O.S. Tjokroaminoto (1882–1934), the president of the *Sarekat Islam* (SI – Islamic Union), the first nation-wide movement in Indonesia, began translating Muhammad Ali's English-language work *The Holy Qur-án* in 1925.[40] As reported by *Tempo*, a Jakarta-based magazine, Tjokroaminoto was working on this "translation of a translation" during his trip to Mecca with Mas Mansur to attend the Islamic World Congress in 1926.[41] There was no criticism or opposition to this project until part of it appeared in *Fadjar Asia*, an Islamic periodical, before the Al-Islam Congress, an annual meeting of all Indonesian Muslim organizations, held in Yogyakarta from 26–29 January in 1928. During the congress, Tjokroaminoto's project was ferociously attacked by delegates representing the Muhammadiyah.[42] The reason for their objections lay in the allegorical and metaphorical aspects of Muhammad Ali's interpretation of the Qurʾan, which were considered unacceptable by mainstream ulama.[43] The attack also took aim at Tjokroaminoto himself, and he was accused of being unqualified to translate the Qurʾan. In his defense, Tjokroaminoto stated that his reason for translating Muhammad Ali's *The Holy Qur-án* instead of another translation was because he believed it was the best translation for his main target audience, the young Muslim intelligentsia who lacked an Islamic education, such as those in the *Jong Islamieten Bond* (JIB), an organization of young, Western-educated Muslims established in 1925. He seemed to believe that this translation could be used effectively to help Dutch-educated Muslims regain their confidence in Islam after it had been drained away by a colonialist education system, in which a strong emphasis was placed on rationality. Ali's translation, he believed, could also be effectively

used to refute accusations against Islam and protect Western-educated Muslims from the appeals of materialism and Christianity that were pervasive at that time.[44]

One of the staunchest defenders of this "translation of a translation" was Agus Salim, Tjokroaminoto's partner in the *dwitunggal* or *duumvirate* that made up the leadership of the *Sarekat Islam*. Agus Salim supported Tjokroaminoto's project and endorsed his choice to use Muhammad Ali's *The Holy Qur-án*. In his introduction to Tjokroaminoto's translation, Agus Salim praised Muhammad Ali's *The Holy Qur-án* for its success in reconciling religion and science (*wetenschap*) without slipping into materialism, rationalism or mysticism, which, he believed, "deviate from monotheistic faith and true Islam", and went on to say that it "could countermand the errors of the Dahriyya [materialists], Mu'tazila [rationalists], and Batiniyya [esotericists]".[45] He also asserted that Tjokroaminoto's translation did not contain anything that deviated from an orthodox, that is, mainstream, understanding of Islam and therefore would certainly not misguide people. Salim also defended the project on the basis that, from an academic perspective, Muhammad Ali's translation of the Qurʾan was on a par with Western scholarship. With this statement, he implicitly argued that Tjokroaminoto's translation suited Muslim scholars of his time and that it could confidently be used as a source that carries academic weight for the purpose of refuting negative allegations about issues such as the supposed intolerance of Islam, the expansion of Islam by means of the sword and Islam's degradation of women.

The controversy over Tjokroaminoto's translation moved beyond the boundaries of Indonesia and became an international issue. During the heated argument in the 1928 Al-Islam Congress, a delegation from the Muhammadiyah came up with a proposal to arrange a debate between Muhammad Ali and Muḥammad Rashīd Riḍā to discuss Ali's translation of the Qurʾan.[46] This proposal was rejected by the participants of the Congress; however, Muhammad Basyuni 'Imran (1885–1981) of Borneo, a student of Rashīd Riḍā, had another idea and sent a letter to Rashīd Riḍā requesting a fatwa (*istiftāʾ*) regarding Tjokroaminoto's and Ali's translation of the Qurʾan. In his reply, Rashīd Riḍā called on his fellow Muslims to avoid using the Ahmadiyya translation because, in his opinion, it could lead them astray. In his view, Ali's translation deviated from the standard interpretation, corrupting and distorting the Qurʾan.[47] Although Riḍā rejected this translation as "deviant" and viewed it as a work that was destroying Islam from within, it is interesting that he also believed that this translation was useful in calling non-Muslims to Islam, particularly those facing a language barrier with regard to Arabic sources.[48]

The opposition of the Muhammadiyah to Tjokroaminoto's project seems to have had two intentions: first, opposing the *Sarekat Islam* and Tjokroaminoto, and second, redeeming the Muhammadiyah's religious authority after it had been tainted by their role in welcoming the Ahmadiyya to Indonesia. The Muhammadiyah seemed to regret their previous policy of cooperating with the Ahmadiyya and so demonstrated bitter opposition to the Ahmadiyya in order to rehabilitate their compromised reputation.[49] The relationship between the Muhammadiyah and the SI had started to fray even before Al-Islam Congress of January 1928, and opposition to Tjokroaminoto's translation seems to have been the climax of the conflict between these two movements. From the perspective of the SI, it was the

Muhammadiyah's policy of accepting subsidies from the colonial government that made their relationship with the Muhammadiyah deteriorate.[50] From the Muhammadiyah's perspective, Tjokroaminoto was not a good religious leader, and his observations of Islamic rituals could not be propagated as a model for Muslims. A trip to Mecca with Mas Mansur to attend the Islamic World Congress and perform the *ḥajj* had revealed his lack of religiosity: it was reported by the Muhammadiyah delegation that he blithely neglected daily religious rituals during his time there. The weakened faith that the Muhammadiyah had in Tjokroaminoto was put under further strain by his close relationship with the Ahmadiyya.[51] On an ideological level, Abdul 'Ali Siddiq al-Qadiri, an Indian cleric touring Java in October–November 1927, made a case for the incompatibility of Ahmadiyya beliefs with Islam that led the Muhammadiyah to distance themselves from the Ahmadiyya movement.[52] Thus, during the seventeenth Congress of the Muhammadiyah in Yogyakarta in February 1928, Yunus Anis, the then–first secretary of the Muhammadiyah, commented that the Muhammadiyah's decision to disapprove of Tjokroaminoto's translation was based on their assessment that Muhammad Ali's *The Holy Qur-án* deviated from the orthodox teachings of Islam as held by mainstream Sunni Muslims.[53] The controversy over Tjokroaminoto's translation of the Qurʾan was then brought before the Congress of the Majlis Ulama Indonesia (Indonesian Council of Ulama) in Kediri on September 27–30, 1928.[54] The Council eventually gave their approval to Tjokroaminoto's translation project, on condition that it would be carried out under the supervision of the Council. However, despite their support, the heated controversy surrounding the project seems to have caused Tjokroaminoto to lose his motivation. By the time of his death in 1934, he had only completed 3 of 30 parts (*juzʾ*) of *The Holy Qur-án* (starting from the last, i.e., the thirtieth *juzʾ*).[55]

Soedewo's Dutch translation

In contrast to Tjokroaminoto's Indonesian translation of Muhammad Ali's *The Holy Qur-án*, which received bitter and devastating opposition from Indonesian Muslims, Soedewo's translation of the same work into Dutch was a great success.[56] In 1934, the 4,000 copies of the first edition of Soedewo's translation were warmly welcomed by the Indonesian Muslim intelligentsia.[57] This is not to say that this translation did not also receive criticism from some quarters, but not to an extent that stopped it from being published.[58] Soedewo's translation has even been reprinted several times in Indonesia and in Dutch-speaking countries such as South Africa, Suriname and the Netherlands.

According to an investigation conducted by *Tempo* magazine, Soedewo's translation could be found in almost every household of the Muslim intelligentsia during the late colonial era.[59] Sukarno, the first president of Indonesia, frequently quoted Soedewo's Qurʾan translation in his religious speeches and writings.[60] Roeslan Abdulgani, a leader of the Indonesian national revolution and a key minister during the Sukarno era (1945–1965), illustrated the extent of his personal value for this translation by stating that the two most significant books in his life were *De vrijmaking der menschheid* by Hendrik Willem Van Loon[61] and *De heilige Qoer-an*

by Muhammad Ali of Lahore. An interview with *Tempo* comments that "when he was arrested by the Dutch, Roeslan allowed all his property to be confiscated under the one condition that he could keep those two books with him".[62] There were at least three reasons Soedewo's translation was so popular and received such interest. First, in terms of the medium of communication, this translation used Dutch, the language of educated people in Indonesia at the time. As described by Karel Steenbrink, the membership of the *Jong Islamieten Bond* (JIB) "mostly consisted of children from the elite, who visited schools where the language of instruction was Dutch. Their language of communication often was also Dutch. Their knowledge of Arabic was usually zero and even their knowledge of Malay and Javanese often very poor".[63] National leaders at that time, such as Sukarno and H.O.S. Tjokroaminoto, did not come from families with strong religious backgrounds and did not attend a *pesantren* (religious school). Therefore, although there were exegetical works available in Arabic, such as *Tafsīr al-Manār* and other modern works from Egypt, the language barrier made these works inaccessible to them.

Second, in terms of content, *De heilige Qoer-an* offered a new understanding of Islam which conformed to the needs of the Indonesian Muslim intelligentsia at that time – the compatibility of religion and science. Confronted with atheism, materialism and Christianity, these members of the Muslim intelligentsia were provided in *De heilige Qoer-an* with an authoritative source that demonstrated the superiority of Islam over other religions and its compatibility with science. From the perspective of traditional ulama such as Abul Hasan Ali Nadwi of India and the Muhammadiyah ulama, *De heilige Qoer-an* relied on an allegorical reading of the Qurʾan that was a deviation from orthodox Islam, which was why they rejected it.[64] However, for the Muslim intelligentsia at that time, these features were precisely what made this translation attractive.

The final reason for the popularity of Soedewo's *De heilige Qoer-an* was the fact that it was the first available translation of the Qurʾan on the market in Indonesia that was accessible in terms of script. A number of exegetical works had been published in Indonesia prior to *De heilige Qoer-an*, but these were all in Arabic or used Arabic script, which was not the language used by the intelligentsia. *Tarjamah Kuran Jawi*, a Javanese translation of the Qurʾan by Bagus Ngarpah, a scholar of the Sultanate Surakarta, for instance, was written in *carakan* and *pegon* (that is, Arabic) script. Religious literature in Malay languages was also often written in Arabic or Javanese script, which the Indonesian intelligentsia at that time could not read, even if they could understand the language.[65]

The official Indonesian translation

After Indonesian independence in 1945, Dutch and Javanese were no longer used as the main languages of communication, and following the introduction of Indonesian as the national language, their use and influence gradually decreased. Both the AAIIL and the AMJ continued to compete in propagating their beliefs using the new lingua franca, Indonesian: the AMJ published the first edition of its translation of the Qurʾan in Indonesian in 1953,[66] while the AAIIL translation of the Qurʾan

into Indonesian was published in 1979.[67] What is interesting in this context is that even though many Muslim scholars opposed the Ahmadiyya translations and regarded them as deviating from the generally accepted translation of the Qurʾan, the Indonesian government translation of the Qurʾan followed their model in terms of layout, format and approach.[68] *Al Quräan dan terdjemahnja*, or, as it became known in later editions, *al-Qur'ān al-karīm*, was first published in 1965 by the Ministry of Religion.[69] Following its publication, there were accusations that the introduction of the first edition of this translation had plagiarized a work by Bashir-ud-Din Mahmud Ahmad, the second caliph of the AMJ, entitled *Introduction to the Study of the Qur'an*.[70] Ahmad's work had been incorporated as an introduction into an AMJ translation of the Qurʾan into English, written by Maulawi Sher Ali, but had also been published separately as a book in 1949.[71] *Indonesia Raya*, a Jakarta-based daily newspaper of the time, first brought this issue to public attention in its December 19, 1973 edition. *Tempo* investigated further, and found that 12 pages of the 125 page-long introduction to the official Indonesian translation had been copied and pasted verbatim from Mahmud Ahmad's work.[72] The relevant sections mainly discussed religions before Islam and their holy books, Islam's place among other religions and humanity's need for the Qurʾanic revelation while arguing that religion was not a product of human imagination.

The project of producing this "official" Indonesian translation of the Qurʾan was undertaken by two teams: one in Jakarta and one in Yogyakarta.[73] The introduction was written by the Jakarta team, which consisted of religious authorities such as Mukti Ali, Bustami Abdulgani, Toha Jahja Omar and Asrul Sani. The Yogyakarta team, which consisted of experts such as Hasbi Ash-Shiddiqie, Mochtar Jahja and Ali Maksum, had taken on the responsibility for the actual translation.[74] However, the general secretary of the Ministry of Religion during the time of project, Bahrum Rangkuti, was also allegedly involved. Rangkuti was an alumnus of Jami'a al-Mubasheren in Rabwah, Pakistan, a school for AMJ missionaries,[75] and this is probably the reason Mahmud Ahmad's work was included verbatim in the official translation.[76] Ahmad's work was also incorporated into the introduction of the later 1990 edition, but his name was omitted from the bibliography, perhaps to avoid criticism from mainstream Muslims. However, this does raise some issues from an academic perspective, as it can be considered plagiarism, especially given the sheer extent of pages taken from Mahmud Ahmad's text. The Ministry of Religion's response to the accusation, through Bahrum Rangkuti, seemed to only address the theological issues raised by the incorporation of an Ahmadiyya text while neglecting the academic issues. Rangkuti said, as quoted by *Tempo*, "The content [of the part of the translation] which was taken [from Mahmud Ahmad's book] does not harm the Islamic faith because it is only talking about historical issues".[77]

The translation of the Qurʾan into vernacular languages

In addition to translations of the Qurʾan into Malay, Dutch and Indonesian, both the AMJ and AAIIL have also translated the Qurʾan into various ethnic or regional

Indonesian languages: the Lahore branch has published a Qurʾan translation in Javanese, while the AMJ branch has published translations in Sundanese (Western Java), Balinese (Bali) and Batakese (the language of the Batak ethnicity on Sumatra). The Javanese translation was conducted by R. Ng. H. Minhadjurrahman Djajasugita and M. Mufti Sharif and was published for the first time in 1958 under the name *Quran sutji djarwa Djawi dalah tafsiripun*.[78] The AMJ has only published partial translations in Sundanese, Balinese and Batakese: the Sundanese translation was entitled *Ayat-ayat pinilih tina Alquran* and was authored by Djajadi, J.D. Narasoma, Anwari and Ahmad Anwar and published in 1988. The Balinese and Batakese versions, which were entitled *Kutipan-kutipan saking al-Qur'an sui ring Bahasa Bali* and *Ayat ayat na tarpillit sian al Quran tu hata Batak*, respectively, also came out in 1988.[79]

The impact of Qurʾan translations into regional or ethnic languages is perhaps not as significant nowadays as it was in previous decades because the dominance of Indonesian has almost driven the regional languages of Indonesia into extinction, particularly in writing. In the early decades of Indonesian independence, however, these languages were more important for disseminating ideas than Indonesian, especially among the Javanese and Sundanese. The story of the conversion of hundreds of people in Kediri, East Java, can be used as an example of the importance of local languages in disseminating certain religious beliefs.[80] The branch of the Lahore Ahmadiyya in Kediri was established in 1963 and led by S.W. Burhanul Arifin. The establishment of this branch, according to a report from the movement, was set in motion by the Javanese translation of the Qurʾan, and it immediately acquired a large following in comparison to the other branches of the Lahore Ahmadiyya in Indonesia: 193 members and 800 prospective members,[81] all of whom were apparently previously nominal Muslims, or *abangan* in Clifford Geertz's terminology.[82] The vernacular Ahmadiyya translation of the Qurʾan was an important factor in their conversion since it made the religious text comprehensible to them.

There is also a particular benefit to using local words and phrases when translating selected verses of the Qurʾan into languages such as Sundanese, Balinese and Batakese, as it means the translator can reference distinctive local beliefs. In the Balinese edition, for instance, the name Allah was rendered as *Ida Sang Hyang Widi Wasa*, the name of God in the Balinese tradition. The prophets were called *awatara* (avatars), and the *nubuwwat* (message of the prophet) was translated as *wangsit* (revelation). These terms allowed the Ahmadiyya translation to chime more closely with existing Balinese culture and spiritual imagination, leading people to feel more comfortable with Ahmadiyya beliefs. The use of these terms also proved to be very beneficial for disseminating Ahmadiyya beliefs in another way: because they provided support for the claim that Ghulam Ahmad was a prophet, the avatar of Krishna and the Messiah. The use of local terminology likewise provided a good foundation for teaching the Ahmadiyya concept of continuous revelation from God, which is very similar to the Balinese belief that *wangsit* can be received by people in the present day.[83]

Conclusion

The Qurʾan used by the Ahmadiyya is the same *muṣḥaf* that other Muslims read and use. The Ahmadiyya translations of the Qurʾan, however, contain distinctive interpretations of certain verses. The presence of such sectarian theological and ideological readings in translations of the Qurʾan is not unique to the Ahmadiyya but can also be found in translations by other Islamic groups or sects. In the case of the Ahmadiyya, one can find certain verses which were translated in accordance with their theological beliefs, particularly those relating to the second coming of the Messiah, on prophethood and on miracles. In sum, the two most distinctive characteristics of Ahmadiyya translations are, first, their polemical positions on Christianity as reflected in the verses about Jesus, and second, their defensive stance on verses related to science.

The response of Indonesian Sunni Muslims to Ahmadiyya translations has always been ambiguous. In contrast to the rather negative reception of the Ahmadiyya as a foreign movement that is opposed by most Indonesian Muslims, Ahmadiyya translations of the Qurʾan were warmly embraced by some members of the Muslim intelligentsia, as we have seen with Sukarno, Tjokroaminoto, Agus Salim and Roeslan Abdulgani in the early twentieth century.[84] The reason members of the Indonesian Muslim intelligentsia eagerly accepted the Ahmadiyya translations, particularly Soedewo's Dutch translation, lies in the Ahmadiyya's unique approach to the interpretation of the Qurʾan. These translations aim to demonstrate that Islam conforms to modern science, give allegorical interpretations for the verses featuring miracles that make them acceptable for rationalists and reject the abrogation of any verse in the Qurʾan on the basis of the belief that all verses in the Qurʾan are true and valid. It was these characteristics, some intellectuals said, which prevented them from losing their Islamic faith and being attracted instead to materialism, atheism or Christianity. The Muhammadiyah and the Nahdlatul Ulama, however, publicly and vocally opposed the Ahmadiyya Qurʾan translations for their deviations from the standard Sunni readings. With regard to the Lahore branch, this deviation is located in their use of allegorical and metaphorical translations for the verses on miracles, while for the AMJ, it is their interpretation of the meaning of *khātam al-nabiyyīn* that makes them deviant.

Nowadays, Ahmadiyya Qurʾan translations are not as popular in Indonesia as they used to be, and not many people turn to the Ahmadiyya for scientific translations of the Qurʾan or for a rebuttal of Christianity. Putting to one side the availability of many more recent references, the translation published by the Lahore Ahmadiyya has become outdated due to its reliance on the scientific discourses of the early and mid-twentieth century. Furthermore, nowadays, interfaith relations in Indonesian academia tend to lean more toward cooperation than rivalry, in sharp contrast to colonial times or the situation shortly after Indonesian independence, which is why the anti-Christian agenda in the Ahmadiyya translations is also no longer relevant.

Notes

1 This chapter is a revised and updated version of "Sectarian Translation of the Qur'an in Indonesia: The Case of the Ahmadiyya", *Al-Jami'ah: Journal of Islamic Studies* 53, no. 2 (2015), 251–282.

2 There are a number of books that try to reinforce this accusation, such as M. Amin Djamaluddin's *Ahmadiyyah & Pembajakan Al-Qur'an* (Jakarta: Lembaga Penelitian & Pengkajian Islam, 2008) and Maman Abdurrahman's *Mirza Ghulam Ahmad Plagiator al-Qur'an: Telaah Komprehensif Plagiasi Mirza Ghulam Ahmad terhadap al-Qur'an* (Bandung: Rahman Press, 2011). The Tadhkirah is a collection of the dreams, visions and revelations of Mirza Ghulam Ahmad that was compiled into a book during the time of the second caliph of Ahmadiyya, Mirza Mahmud Ahmad. See www.alislam.org/book/tadhkirah/, accessed 9 February 2023.

3 In 1914 the Ahmadiyya split into two camps: the Ahmadiyya Muslim Jama'at (AMJ, often labelled as Qadiani by opposing Muslims) and the much smaller Lahore Ahmadiyya Movement (AAIIL). The split was brought about by disputes over the caliphate, the election of a caliph and the appropriate way to propagate the Ahmadiyya's message. The main theological difference between the two branches is their perception of Mirza Ghulam Ahmad. The AAIIL only sees him as a reformer (*mujaddid*) of Islam and *muḥaddath* (one who receives revelation), whereas the AMJ believe that Ghulam Ahmad was a prophet, the Messiah and the Mahdi. See Ahmad Najib Burhani, "Torn between Muhammadiyah and Ahmadiyah: Discussing Erfaan Dahlan's Religious Affiliation and Self-exile", *Indonesia and the Malay World* 48, no. 140 (2020), 60–77.

4 Translations of the Qur'an by non-Muslims, such as George Sale and Alexander Ross, predate translations by Muslims. See Sage Woolworth, "A Bibliography of Koran Texts and Translations", *Muslim World* 17, no. 3 (1927), 279–289, and Mofakhkhar Hussain Khan, "English Translations of the Holy Qur'ān: A Bio-bibliographic Study", *Islamic Quarterly* 30, no. 2 (1986), 82–108.

5 Sukarno, *Dibawah Bendera Revolusi*, vol. I (Djakarta: Panitya Penerbit Dibawah Bender Revolusi, 1964).

6 For example, al-Jizāwī (Shaykh al-Azhār 1917–1928) said that the translation of the Qurʾan into *ʿajamī* (non-Arabic) was forbidden. Rashīd Riḍā backed al-Jizāwī's opinion by saying that the Qurʾan should not be translated in publications by the Salafi press, including *al-Manār* and *Tafsīr al-Manār*. This policy was developed, according to Rashīd Riḍā, for the sake of Muslim unity, both religious and political. See F.V. Greifenhagen, "Traduttore Traditore: An Analysis of the History of English Translations of the Qur'an", *Islam and Christian-Muslim Relations* 3, no. 2 (1992), 274; Gerard Wiegers, "Language and Identity: Pluralism and the Use of Non-Arabic Languages in the Muslim West", in *Pluralism and Identity: Studies in Ritual Behaviour*, eds. Jan Platvoet and Karel van der Toorn (Leiden: Brill, 1995), 317, 320; Moch. Nur Ichwan, "Negara, Kitab Suci dan Politik: Terjemahan Resmi al-Qur'an di Indonesia", in *Sadur: Sejarah Terjemahan di Indonesia dan Malaysia*, ed. Henri Chambert-Loir (Jakarta: Kepustakaan Populer Gramedia, 2009), 417–418.

7 In Indonesia, prohibitions on translating the Qurʾan into vernacular languages were also issued. For instance, Sayyid Utsman of Batavia (Jakarta) published a book entitled *Ḥukm al-Raḥmān bi'l-nahyʿan tarjamat al-Qurʾān* ("God's Ruling on the Prohibition of Translating the Qurʾan") in 1327/1909 in support of this stance during the Dutch colonial era. See Ichwan, "Negara, Kitab Suci dan Politik", 417.

8 Greifenhagen, "Traduttore Traditore". See also Neal Robinson, "Sectarian and Ideological Bias in Muslim Translations of the Qur'an", *Islam and Christian-Muslim Relations* 8, no. 3 (1997), 261–278.

9 Greifenhagen, "Traduttore Traditore", 274. Some ulama even believe that all humans can do is to interpret the passages of the Qurʾan or to find the closest meaning possible, not actually translate the Qurʾan in the original sense of the word "translation".
10 Woolworth, "A Bibliography of Koran Texts and Translations"; Greifenhagen, "Traduttore Traditore"; and James Baber, *Translators of the English Qur'an: Historical Patterns of Change from 1649 to 2005* (MA thesis, Carson: California State University Dominguez Hills, 2008).
11 R.F. McNeile, "The Koran According to Ahmad", *Muslim World* 6, no. 2 (1916), 174; Khan, "English Translations of the Holy Qur'ān", 89.
12 Muhammad Ahmad, Mumtaz Ahmad Faruqui, and Zahid Aziz, *A Mighty Striving: The Biography of Maulana Muhammad Ali, Renowned Translator of the Holy Qur'an, Author, Scholar and Missionary of Islam* (Dublin, OH: Ahmadiyya Anjuman Isha'at Islam Lahore, 2004), 75.
13 Jeremy Shearmur published the result of his study on Woking Mosque and the Ahmadiyya community in London in the first half of the twentieth century in his article "The Woking Mosque Muslims: British Islam in the Early Twentieth Century", *Journal of Muslim Minority Affairs* 34, no. 2 (2014), 165–173.
14 Ahmad, Faruqui and Aziz, *A Mighty Striving*, 47. The AMJ claimed that the translation is the property of the Ahmadiyya, not Muhammad Ali. The reasons given to support this claim are that the translation was supervised by the second caliph of the Ahmadiyya, Nuruddin; that many ideas in the translation came from Mirza Ghulam Ahmad; and that the project was funded by the Ahmadiyya. Muhammad Ali, however, rejected this claim by stating that it was his intellectual work and that he provided most of the funding himself.
15 The inclusion of a lengthy preface served as a model for the official Indonesian translation of the Qurʾan.
16 For a discussion of other distinctive characteristics of Muhammad Ali's translation, see A. Bausani, "On Some Recent Translations of the Qur'ān", *Numen* 4, no. 1 (1957), 75–81; John Warwick Montgomery, "The Apologetic Approach of Muhammad Ali and its Implications for Christian Apologetics", *Muslim World* 51, no. 2 (1961), 119; Greifenhagen, "Traduttore Traditore"; and Baber, *Translators of the English Qur'an*.
17 Montgomery, "The Apologetic Approach of Muhammad Ali and its Implications for Christian Apologetics", 119.
18 Robinson, "Sectarian and Ideological Bias in Muslim Translations of the Qur'an", 269.
19 Muhammad Ali, *The Holy Qur-án: Containing Arabic Text with English Translation and Commentary* (Woking [Surrey]: Islamic Review Office, 1917), 750.
20 Abdullah Yusuf Ali, *The Qur'an: Text, Translation and Commentary* (New York: Tahrike Tarsile Qur'an, 2008).
21 This particular translation is taken from Saheeh International, https://quranenc.com/en/browse/english_saheeh/1293, accessed 10 January 2021.
22 Ali, *The Holy Qur-án*, 241–243.
23 See Sher 'Alī, *The Holy Qur'ān: Arabic Text and English Translation* (Rabwah, West Pakistan: Published under the auspices of Hazrat Mirza Bashir-ud-Din Mahmud Ahmad by the Oriental and Religious Pub. Corp, 1955); Maulawi Sher 'Alī, *The Holy Qur'ān: Arabic Texts and English Translation* (Surrey: Islam International Publications Ltd., 2004).
24 Zafrullah Khan has been considered one of the two most prominent followers of the AMJ. He was the first foreign minister of Pakistan and a judge at the International Court of Justice (ICJ) in The Hague. Another renowned follower of the Ahmadiyya is Abdus Salam, a Nobel Prize-winning physicist.
25 Muhammad Zafrullah Khan, *The Quran: The Eternal Revelation Vouchsafed to Muhammad, the Seal of the Prophets* (London: Curzon Press, 1975).
26 Muhammad Zafrulla Khan, *The Qur'an: Arabic Text with a New Translation* (Northampton, MA: Olive Branch Press, 2004), 96.

27 Malik Ghulam Farid, *The Holy Qur'ān: Arabic Text with English Translation & Commentary*. Published under the auspices of Hadrat Mirza Masroor Ahmad, 5 vols (Surrey: Islam International Publications Ltd., 2019), vol. 5, 2627. The statement that Mirza Ghulam Ahmad is the Promised Messiah also appears when he translates Q 2:5 ("And who believe in that which has been b revealed to thee and that which was revealed before thee and they have firm faith in the Hereafter"). See Malik Ghulam Farid, *The Holy Qur'ān: Arabic Text with English Translation & Commentary* (Surrey: Islam International Publications Ltd., 2019), vol. 1, 42–43. He says: "This prophecy found its fulfilment in the person of Ahmad, the Promised Messiah and Founder of the Ahmadiyya Movement in Islam, in whose advent have been fulfilled also the prophecies of other Prophets regarding the appearance of a World Messenger in the Latter Days".
28 Farid, *The Holy Qur'ān*, vol. 4, 2125–2126; Ali, *The Holy Qur-án*, 826.
29 GAI, "Anggaran Dasar (Qanun Asasi)", 83.
30 By showing that the Qurʾan is a collection of revelations received by the Prophet Muhammad during his lifetime, missionaries strive to prove that this religion is a revealed religion, not a creation of human beings. As stated by Muhammad Ali, the Qurʾan is the most important miracle in Islam.
31 Fazlur Rahman, "Islam: Challenges and Opportunities", in *Islam: Past Influence and Present Challenge*, eds. Alford T. Welch and Pierre Cachia (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1979).
32 Rahman's neo-modernism can be seen, for example, from his double movement theory in interpreting the Qurʾan: "from the present situation to Qur'anic times, then back to the present". Fazlur Rahman, *Islam and Modernity: Transformation of an Intellectual Tradition* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1982), 5.
33 Rahman, *Islam and Modernity*, 316.
34 Kamal-ud-Din, "The Holy Qur-an and Its Commentary: Introduction", *Islamic Review* XX, no. 5 (1932), 166.
35 Ali, *The Holy Qur-án*, xiii.
36 "Materialism" is a common term in both Indonesian and Ahmadiyya literature in the early twentieth century. The meaning of it is close to that of secularism.
37 According to Baber, there are three main purposes of Ahmadiyya translation projects: 1) Islamizing the English-speaking world, 2) combating Christian missionaries in India and 3) proclaiming the uniqueness of Ahmadiyya beliefs (Baber, *Translators of the English Qur'an*, 42–43).
38 According to Peter Riddell, the first exegetical work on the entire Qurʾan to be written in an Indonesian language was ʿAbd al-Raʿuf al-Singkili's *Tarjumān al-Mustafīd*, which dates to the seventeenth century. See Peter Riddell, "Earliest Quranic Exegetic Activity in the Malay Speaking States", *Archipel* 38, no. 1 (1989), 107–124; Peter Riddell, "Controversy in Qur'anic Exegesis and its Relevance to the Malaya-Indonesian World", in *The Making of an Islamic Political Discourse in Southeast Asia*, ed. Anthony Reid (Clayton, Vic: Centre of Southeast Asian Studies, Monash University, 1993). Other translations of the Qur'an are *Kitab Kur'an: Tetedakanipun ing Tembang Arab Kajawekaken* (1858) and *Fayḍ al-Raḥmān fī tafsīr al-Qurʾān* (1894). The author of the former is anonymous, while the latter was authored either by Muhammad Shalih bin 'Umar al-Samarani or Kyai Shaleh Darat. See Ichwan, "Negara, Kitab Suci dan Politik", 417.
39 This movement began in the eighteenth century, in the time of Muḥammad b. ʿAbd al-Wahhāb (1703–1792). Fazlur Rahman describes Ibn 'Abd al-Wahhāb's project as "the 'first throb of life' in Islam after its rapid decline in the preceding several centuries". See Rahman, "Islam: Challenges and Opportunities", 316. However, this does not mean that the Ahmadiyya had particular links to Muḥammad b. ʿAbd al-Wahhāb. In fact, there was a contemporary of Muḥammad b. ʿAbd al-Wahhāb in the Indian subcontinent, namely Shāh Walī Allāh al-Dihlāwī (1703–1762), who was much more influential there and was an important source for all kinds of modernist trends, including the Ahmadiyya movement.

40 Deliar Noer, *The Modernist Muslim Movement in Indonesia, 1900–1942* (Singapore: Oxford University Press, 1973), 150–151. Noer's reference is *Fadjar Asia*, 4 February 1928. This newspaper is not available to the author.

41 *Tempo*, "Ahmadiyah, Sebuah Titik yang Dilupa", *Tempo Magazine* 29, no. 4, 21 September 1974. During the sixth al-Islam Congress in September 1925, Tjokroaminoto and Mas Mansur were elected to represent the Muslim people of the East Indies at the Islamic World Congress. See Harry J. Benda, *The Crescent and the Rising Sun: Indonesian Islam under the Japanese Occupation, 1942–1945* (The Hague: W. van Hoeve, 1958), 52, 214.

42 Harry Benda mentions that the attack came not only from the Muhammadiyah but also from the Nahdlatul Ulama: "Together they opposed the spread of *Ahmadiyah* teachings, and together they vetoed an Indonesian Koran translation by Tjokroaminoto, based on the English *Ahmadiyah* version". Benda, *The Crescent and the Rising Sun*, 54.

43 A number of Qurʾanic verses that became the subject of debate during the congress have been discussed by Herman Beck in "The Rupture between the Muhammadiyah and the Ahmadiyya", *Bijdragen tot de Taal-, Land-En Volkenkunde* 161, no. 2 (2005), 235 n. 46.

44 Margaret Blood, *The Ahmadiyah in Indonesia: Its Early History and Contribution to Islam in the Archipelago* (Honours sub-thesis, Canberry: Australian National University, 1974). The references used by Margaret Blood are *Mailrapport 141X28* and "Salinan dan tafsir Qoeran soetji", *Fadjar Asia*, 4 February 1928.

45 H.M. Bachrun, *Qur'an Suci, Terjemah & Tafsir*. Translation from Maulana Muhammad Ali's *The Holy Qur'an*, 12th ed. (Jakarta: Darul Kutubil Islamiyah, 2006), vii.

46 Blood, *The Ahmadiyah in Indonesia*, 43.

47 This call is mentioned in *Fatāwā l-imām Muḥammad Rashīd Riḍa*, a collection of his fatwas. The fatwa is *Tarjamat Muḥammad ʿĀli al-Hindī li'l-Qur'ān*, fatwa no. 742. Riḍā confused the Lahore and AMJ Ahmadiyya, calling Muhammad Ali a member of the AMJ Ahmadiyya while he was in fact the president of the Lahore Ahmadiyya. See Muhammad Rashīd Riḍā, *Fatāwā l-Imām Muḥammad Rashīd Riḍā*, eds. Ṣalāḥ al-Dīn Munajjid and Yūsuf Q. Khūrī, 6 vols. (Bayrūt: Dār al-Kitāb al-Jadīd, 2005), vol. 5, 2057–2059. For a discussion of Riḍā's fatwa on Muhammad Ali's *The Holy Qur-án*, see Moch. Nur Ichwan, "Differing Responses to an Ahmadi Translation and Exegesis. The Holy Qur'ân in Egypt and Indonesia", *Archipel* 62, no. 1 (2001), 143–161. For the fatwa on the status of the Ahmadiyya in Islam, see Ahmad Najib Burhani, "Treating Minorities with Fatwās: A Study of the Ahmadiyya Community in Indonesia", *Contemporary Islam* 8, no. 3 (2014), 285–301.

48 For a discussion of Riḍā's comments on Ali's translation and the Ahmadiyya in general, see Umar Ryad, "Salafiyya, Ahmadiyya and European Converts to Islam in the Interwar Period", in *Muslims in Interwar Europe: A Transcultural Historical Perspective*, eds. Bekim Agai, Umar Ryad, and Mehdi Sajid (Leiden and Boston: Brill, 2015), particularly 57–58.

49 The arrival of the Lahore Ahmadiyya in Indonesia was initially welcomed by the Muhammadiyah. Leaders of this organization believed that they had found an ally in checking the expansion of Christianity and spreading an understanding of Islam that was compatible with modernity. The Muhammadiyah provided a house in Kauman, Yogyakarta for two Lahore missionaries (Mirza Wali Ahmad Baig and Maulana Ahmad) after their arrival at the end of March 1924. The two missionaries were even invited by the Central Board of the Muhammadiyah to give a lecture at its thirteenth Muktamar (Congress) in Yogyakarta in 1924 and a subsequent congress in Yogyakarta in 1925. Cordial relations between the Muhammadiyah and the Ahmadiyya came to an end when the Muhammadiyah realized that the teachings of the Ahmadiyya were not in line with their own, whereupon they began to voice open opposition to the movement. The first decision made by the Muhammadiyah after this rupture was to issue a Maklumat (edict) in 1928 prohibiting Ahmadiyya teachings and beliefs in Muhammadiyah circles. As

a corollary to this edict, the Muhammadiyah began "clearing away" any Ahmadiyya elements from the Muhammadiyah movement, disciplining a number of its members who had sympathies or close relations with Mirza Wali Baig. Their opposition to the Ahmadiyya climaxed with the issuance of a fatwa during the eighteenth Muktamar in Solo in 1929. This fatwa declared that those who believe in the existence of a prophet after the Prophet Muhammad were *kafir* or unbelievers. See Burhani, "Torn between Muhammadiyah and Ahmadiyah", 62–65.

50 Noer, *The Modernist Muslim Movement in Indonesia*, 237.

51 Previously, there was a cordial relationship between the Muhammadiyah, Tjokroaminoto and the Ahmadiyya. Several Ahmadiyya books were translated into Malay or Indonesia and published by the Muhammadiyah's publisher.

52 Iskandar Zulkarnain, *Gerakan Ahmadiyah di Indonesia* (Yogyakarta: LKiS Yogyakarta, 2005), 190; Beck, "The Rupture between the Muhammadiyah and the Ahmadiyya", 236. Hamka mentions that it was his father, Haji Rasul, who unveiled the theological differences between the Ahmadiyya and Sunni Islam. See Hamka (Haji Abdul Karim Malik Amrullah), *Ayahku: Riwayat Hidup Dr. H. Abdul Karim Amrullah dan Perjuangan Kaum Agama di Sumatera* (Jakarta: Umminda, 1982), 149.

53 Previously, Muhammad Husni was the first secretary of the Muhammadiyah. He was dismissed from his position for his association with the Ahmadiyya. Yunus Anis was then appointed as the first secretary to replace him. Beck, "The Rupture between the Muhammadiyah and the Ahmadiyya", 235–236.

54 This institution was established in 1927. During the SI Congress in January 1928, it was approved by the members of the SI as the council of ulama for the Indonesian Muslim community in general, although in reality it was only a department within the SI. The leadership of this council consisted of K.H.M. Anwaruddin (Rembang), K.H.M. Abdullah Siradj (Yogyakarta) and Haji Abdul Halim (Majalengka). According to Tjokroaminoto, it had around 150 members. See Noer, *The Modernist Muslim Movement in Indonesia,* 150.

55 See *Qoer'an Soetji, Disertai Salinan dan Keterangannja dalam Bahasa Melajoe, Ditardjamahkan oleh Hadji 'Oemar Sa'id Tjokroaminoto. Daripada Karangan Bahasa Inggeris oleh Maulvi Moehammad Ali. Bahagian I-III* (Weltevreden: Fadjar Asia, 1928). This translation is available in the Indonesian National Library, barcode: 1211519818 and 1211519846, no. XXXI: – 1091.

56 The title of this translation is *De heilige Qoer-an: Vervattende den Arabischen tekst met opheldernde aanteekeningen en voorrede van Maulwi Moehammed Ali* (Batavia: Hoofdcomité Qoer-ânfonds, 1934). There were two translations of the Qurʾan in Malay that appeared almost simultaneously, namely Ahmad Hassan's *Al-Furqan: Tafsir Quraan*, which was published for the first time in 1928 and Mahmud Yunus' *Tarjamah Al Quran Al Karim*, which came out in 1935. See Peter Riddell, "Menerjemahkan al-Qur'an ke dalam Bahasa-bahasa di Indonesia", in *Sadur: Sejarah Terjemahan di Indonesia dan Malaysia*, ed. Henri Chambert-Loir (Jakarta: Kepustakaan Populer Gramedia, 2009), 403.

57 Soedewo, *Asas-asas dan Pekerdjaan Gerakan Ahmadijah Indonesia (Centrum Lahore)*, trans. into Malay by Sastrawiria (Soekaboemi: Gerakan Ahmadijah Indonesia [Centrum Lahore], 1937), 87; GAI (Gerakan Ahmadiyah Lahore Indonesia), *Anggaran Dasar (Qanun Asasi)* (Yogyakarta: Gerakan Ahmadiyah Lahore Indonesia, n.d.), 109–110.

58 *Adil*, a magazine published by the Muhammadiyah, in its edition no. 135 on 8 February 1934, for instance, makes the following statement: "The Dutch translation of the Qur'an simply leads [people] astray, making [our] descendants fall into *jahannam* (hell); poisonous exegesis for Muslims". See S. Ali Yasir and Yatimin, *100 Tahun Ahmadiyah: 60 Tahun Gerakan Ahmadiyah Lahore Indonesia* (Yogyakarta: Pedoman Besar GAI, Bagian Tabligh dan Tarbiyah, 1989), 37; GAI, *Anggaran Dasar (Qanun Asasi)*, 109.

59 *Tempo*, "Ahmadiyah, Sebuah Titik yang Dilupa".

60 Sukarno, *Kalau Akan; Mentjari Tuhan, Batjalah al-Qur'an* (Djakarta: Departemen Agama, 1963); Soekarno, *Alquran Membentuk Manusia Baru* (Djakarta: Departemen Agama, 1964); Sukarno, *Dibawah Bendera Revolusi*.

61 See Hendrik Willem Van Loon, *De vrijmaking der menschheid: Geschiedenis van's menschen strijd om het recht van vrijheid van gedachte* (Amsterdam: Scheltens & Giltay, 1930). This book is about human efforts to free themselves from fear and to resist oppression.

62 Roeslan Abdulgani, "Cak Roes, dari 'kapten' langsung", interview by *Tempo*, 27 December 1975. http://majalah.tempointeraktif.com/id/arsip/1975/12/27/TK/mbm.19751227.TK68399.id.html, accessed 14 October 2011.

63 Karel A. Steenbrink, "The Study of Comparative Religion by Indonesian Muslims: A Survey", *Numen* 37, no. 2 (1990), 146.

64 Abdulḥasan ʿAli Nadwi, *Qadianism: A Critical Study* (Lucknow: Academy of Islamic Research and Publications, 1965). Among the verses of the Qurʾan that became a subject of debate are Q 2.60; 2.72–73; 3.49; 27.16–18; 34.14; 27.30; and 72.1.

65 I wish to thank Johanna Pink for pointing out this issue.

66 Shaikh Khurshid Ahmad, "A Brief History of Ahmadiyya Muslim Community", www.alislam.org/library/history/ahmadiyya/56.html, accessed 14 October 2011. My reference is Lembaga Penjelenggara Penterdjemah Kitab Sutji al Quräan and Jajasan Penjelenggara Penterdjemah/Pentafsir al Quräan, *Al Quräan dan terdjemahnja = al-Qur'ān al-karīm*, 3 vols (Djakarta: Lembaga Penjelenggara Penterdjemah Kitab Sutji al Quräan, 1965).

67 The Indonesian translation of the Qurʾan by the Lahore Ahmadiyya, translated from Muhammad Ali's *The Holy Qur'an* by H.M. Bachrun, was approved and certified by the Ministry of Religion on 2 July 1971 (No. Sd/Lega/II-d/82/71).

68 For the view that Ahmadiyya translations deviate from the standard translation in Sunni Islam, see M. Quraish Shihab, "Menyikapi Perbedaan dengan Cara Beradab", in *Menggugat Ahmadiyah: Mengungkap Ayat-ayat Kontroversial dalam Tafsir Ahmadiyah*, ed. Muchlis M. Hanafi (Tangerang: Lentera Hati, 2011). For a discussion of the background, history and some "mistakes" of the Indonesian translation from the view of the Qadiani Ahmadiyya, see Hanafi, *Menggugat Ahmadiyah*. Hanafi's book received a response from R.H. Munirul Islam Yusuf and Ekky O. Sabandi, *Ahmadiyah Menggugat! Menjawab Tulisan: "Menggugat Ahmadiyah"* (Bandung: Mubarak Publishing, 2011).

69 The first edition of this translation used Indonesian in its old orthography: *al Quräan dan Terdjemahnja = al-Qur'ān al-Karīm*. This edition consists of three volumes, published separately in 1965, 1967 and 1969. The first edition was printed at a printing house called Yayasan Mu'awanah Nahdlatul Ulama (Yamunu). Accordingly, this edition is often called the "Yamunu Edition". The second edition was published in 1974 when Abdul Mukti Ali was the Minister of Religion. Therefore, the second edition was named the "Mukti Ali Edition". The third edition was published by Mujamma' Khadim al-Haramayn al-Sharifayn al-Malik Fahd li-Ṭabāʿat al-Muṣḥaf al-Sharīf in 1990. This edition has been distributed for free to Indonesian pilgrims as a gift from the King of Saudi Arabia. Therefore, this edition is called the "Saudi Edition". See Ichwan "Negara, Kitab Suci dan Politik", 420; Budi Setiono, "Jejak Tafsir Kaum Ahmadi", *Majalah Historia*, Friday, 26 August 2011, www.majalah-historia.com/berita-489-jejak-tafsir-kaum-ahmadi.html, accessed 13 October 2011.

70 The official Indonesian translation of the Qurʾan was published by Mujamma' Khadim al-Haramain al-Syarifain (n.d.) and corrected by Lajnah Pentashih al-Qur'an, a department of the Ministry of Religion, on 28 February 1990. It still contains Mahmud Ahmad's work, but he is not mentioned in the bibliography. See Bashir-ud-Din Mahmud Ahmad, *Introduction to the Study of the Holy Quran* (London: The London Mosque, 1949).

71 My reference is the 1996 edition.

72 *Tempo*, "'Jiplak-menjiplak' Tafsir Qur'an". Besides the content, the official translation also allegedly follows the design and *khaṭṭ* (type of script) of the Qadiani translation. See R. Ahmad Anwar, *Di Mana Letak Kesesatan dan Bahaya Ahmadiyah?* (Bandung: Yayasan al-Abror, 2002), 9–11.

73 "Official" here means that the translation is produced and distributed by the Indonesian government.

74 *Tempo*, "'Jiplak-menjiplak' Tafsir Qur'an".

75 Ismatu Ropi, "Islamism, Government Regulation and the Ahmadiyah Controversy in Indonesia", *Al-Jamiah* 48, no. 2 (2010), 295–296; M. Dawam Rahardjo, "Gerakan Ahmadiyah dalam Krisis", in *Bukan Sekedar Hitam Putih: Kontroversi Pemahaman Ahmadiyah*, ed. M.A. Suryawan (Tangerang: Azahra Publishing, 2005), xi. Bahrum Rangkuti also translated Bashir-ud-Din Mahmud Ahmad's *The Economic Structure of Islamic Society* (Qadian: Nazim Book Depot Tahrik-i-Jadid, 1946) into Indonesian and entitled it *Bentoek Dasar Ekonomi Doenia: Pembinaan Masjarakat Doenia, Filsafat Ekonomi, Hakikat Pertempoeran Politik Dewasa Ini, Dilihat dari Segi Islam, Kapitalisme dan Komoenisme*, trans. Bahroem Rangkoeti (Djakarta: Neratja Trading Co., 1948).

76 According to a source from the Ahmadiyya, the relationship between Mukti Ali and the Ahmadiyya developed while he was studying in Pakistan. During his studies there, he stayed in the house of Yahya Pontoh, a prominent Ahmadiyya figure. See Zaenal Abidin E. P., *Syarif Ahmad Saitama Lubis: Dari Ahmadiyah untuk Bangsa* (Berbah, Sleman, and Yogyakarta: Logung Pustaka, 2007), 180.

77 *Tempo*, "'Jiplak-menjiplak' Tafsir Qur'an".

78 See Muhammad Ali, *Quran Sutji Djarwa Djawi dalah Tafsiripun*, trans. Minhadjurrahman Djajasugita and M. Mufti Sharif (Jogjakarta: Gerakan Ahmadijah Indonesia, 1958). This translation was approved by the Ministry of Religion on October 3, 1958 (No. D. 26/Q.I) and certified by the Lajnah Pentashih Mushaf al-Qur'an (Committee for the Rectification of the Texts of the Qur'an) of this Ministry on March 13, 1959 (No. A/O/IV/3602). The Indonesian government did not publish official translations of the Qur'an in languages other than Indonesian before the twenty-first century.

79 Djajadi et al., *Ayat-ayat Pinilih Tina Alquran* (Jakarta: Islam International Publications Ltd. 1988); Ahmadiyya Muslim Community, *Kutipan-kutipan saking al-Qur'an Sui Ring Bahasa Bali* (Tilford: Islam International Publications Ltd., 1988); Anonymous, *Ayat Ayat na Tarpillit Sian al Quran tu Hata Batak* (Tilford: Islam International Publications Ltd., 1988). The translators of the Balinese and Batakese editions are not indicated in the book.

80 On the question whether or not the Ahmadiyya translation has an impact on the conversion of people to this religious group, see Ahmad Najib Burhani, "Conversion to the Ahmadiyya in Indonesia: Winning Hearts through Ethical and Spiritual Appeals", *Sojourn* 29, no. 3 (2014), 657–690.

81 Yasir and Yatimin, *100 Tahun Ahmadiyah*, 44; GAI, *Anggaran Dasar (Qanun Asasi)*, 120–121.

82 Ahmad Najib Burhani, "Geertz's Trichotomy of Abangan, Santri, and Priyayi: Controversy and Continuity", *Journal of Indonesian Islam* 11, no. 2 (2017), 329–350.

83 On *nubuwah*, see Marilyn Robinson Waldman, "Nubuwah", in *The Encyclopedia of Religion,* eds. Mircea Eliade and Charles J. Adams, vol. 11 (New York: Macmillan, 1987), 1–7.

84 The Ahmadiyya received legal status in Indonesia during the Sukarno era. The government's acceptance of the Ahmadiyya during the early years seems to have been influenced more by its attitude toward pluralism at the time than by the Ahmadiyya Qurʾan translations themselves. However, the close relationship between the Ahmadis and a few figures in the government, such as Sukarno and Roeslan Abdulgani, certainly had an impact on the decision to accept the existence of the Ahmadiyya in Indonesia.

3 The representation of God in Acehnese Qur'an translation

Wahhabi-Salafi translations of anthropomorphic verses and the verdict on heresy

Saifuddin Dhuhri

Introduction

There is increasing awareness that translation as a process is inextricably linked with power structures and hegemony. Abdallah El-Khatib argues that translations of the Qurʾan produced by different Muslim groups and religious schools, which rely on their differing interpretations of the holy text, can be considered ideological tools. For example, the choice of translations produced and used by ISIS and its followers are determined by the group's radical ideology, which can be seen clearly, for example, in their adoption of Saheeh International's interpretation of Q 2:191 and Q 9:5 concerning the application of sharia law.[1]

This chapter demonstrates that Qurʾan translation is used by mainstream traditionalist ulama in Aceh as a way to maintain pre-eminence over the Wahhabi-Salafis,[2] who, despite often being described as a globally expanding trend, remain a marginalized minority group in the province. That marginalization was exacerbated when the province obtained partial autonomy in 2005, upon the agreement of the memorandum of understanding (MoU) between the Indonesian government and the Free Aceh Movement, which marked the end of the 1976–2005 Aceh insurgency. As vertical conflict between the government and the Free Aceh Movement subsided, a horizontal conflict between different groups of Muslims took its place, and Qurʾan translation was one of the loci of that conflict.[3] The interpretation of anthropomorphic verses in the Qurʾan was one of the issues that generated the most debate and expedited tensions in Aceh, as the Wahhabis and traditionalist scholars have very different teachings on these verses. Against this backdrop, the aim of this chapter is to explore the relationship between Wahhabi-Salafi translations of the anthropomorphic verses adopted by the Wahhabis in Aceh and the current mass mobilization of other translations and interpretations against this Muslim minority group by other groups. It seeks to answer the following questions: Which methods of interpretation are applied to anthropomorphic verses, and which elements of the translation of these verses are disputed between the Wahhabi-Salafi and Acehnese ulama consultation boards? What are the reasons behind shifts in interpretation and religious thought? The primary sources of this chapter are contemporary Wahhabi and Salafi teachings collected through direct and participant observation, analysis of documents and texts on the basis of creed and interviews with key informants from both sides.

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The parties in the conflict: the traditionalist and reformist ulama of Aceh and the role of the MPU

The contest over religious predominance in Aceh can be understood as a power struggle between two camps that, at the risk of oversimplification, might be labelled "traditionalist" and "reformist" scholars. The traditionalist scholars are locally known as *dayah* ulama, *dayah* being the term for a traditional Islamic school that is usually seen as an identification marker of Acehnese Islam.[4] *Dayah* ulama follow Ashʿari theology and today account for the majority of scholars in the MPU, the *Majelis Permusyawaratan Ulama* ("The Consultative Council of Ulama"), a formal and highly authoritative organization that is in charge of religious affairs in Aceh.[5] Reformist ulama, today commonly referred to as Wahhabi-Salafi ulema, are now a minority and are generally relegated to a peripheral position. However, the reformists were in power between 1953 and 1964 during the governorships of Daud Beureueh (1899–1987) and Ali Hasjmy (1914–1998) under the umbrella of the Persatuan Ulama Seluruh Aceh (PUSA; "All-Aceh Ulama") organization, which was established in 1939, and were actually responsible for founding the MPU. At that time, the reformists were inspired less by Wahhabism and more by Pan-Islamists such as Muḥammad ʿAbduh, Jamāl al-Dīn al-Afghānī and Rashīd Riḍā.[6] PUSA promoted the idea that the traditional rituals and practices such as *Peusijuek*,[7] *seuneujoh* (a feast that is held one week after someone is buried), *maulid* (the Prophet's birthday) and *kenduri* (a banquet to commemorate something or ask for blessings) that were advocated by the *dayah* ulama at the time were heresy. The two groups also disagreed over the practices of *qunut* (a specific kind of supplication) and *tarawieh* (nightly prayers during Ramadan). Daud Beureueh and Ali Hasjmy, during their respective times as governors of Aceh (Beureueh from 1948 to 1953, and Hasjmy between 1957 and 1964), supported the reformist scholars' cause and issued joint regulations with the (then reformist-dominated) MPU that prohibited these traditional rituals (see document attached).

The MPU is one of the key actors in the current conflict and was formed during the leading Acehnese reformist Ali Hasjmy's term when, from December 17 to 18, 1964, PUSA held a meeting with the purpose of securing an agreement to establish a formal institution through which the ulama would be allowed to play a role in influencing the executive organs of the state.[8] This led to the formation of the MPU, a religious legislative board which is particularly responsible for religious affairs, while conventional legislators are charged with responsibility for non-religious matters.[9]

Even though the reformists were in power at that time, there were many Acehnese Muslims, such as the *dayah* community, who were strongly opposed to modernist ideology. The *dayah* community believed that the reformists did not have the right to prohibit traditional Islamic rituals, on the basis that these practices are part of Islamic teachings, and viewed the reformists as misguided, and even as infidels. Although the reformists had political power, they had difficulty facing down the traditionalist opposition for two reasons. First, the *dayah* community was supported by the majority of the Acehnese population. Second, those rituals denoted as

heretical by the reformists were deep-rooted markers of Acehnese cultural identity and ideology.

In the early years of this century, there were significant shifts in Acehnese religious discourse, in particular after the 2004 tsunami. In the immediate aftermath of the tsunami, many Acehnese received support from international aid organizations and NGOs. This aid extended to the religious sphere and included, as well as financial aid, an influx of scholars who were followers of the Hanbali school of law and the ideas of Taqī al-Dīn Ibn Taymiyya (1260–1328), one of the foremost Wahhabi-Salafi authorities. Many of them were alumni from a university in Yemen that has strong affiliations with Saudi Arabia. These scholars included such figures as Harist Abu Naufal and Imam Abu Abdillah. As a result of these religious interventions, several new centers that disseminate Wahhabi teachings were established, and a number of existing institutions, such as the Oman Mosque and Al-Fitrah Mosque, have become prosperous centers of learning.

Instrumentalizing the MPU for hegemony

By the 2000s, ulama who had received their education in the *dayah* system (known as ASWAJA, or *ahl al-sunna wa'l-jamāʿa*) and Wahhabi/PUSA ulama, who embraced Ibn Taymiyya's teachings, dominated the religious discourse in Aceh.[10] However, the tide had turned against the modernists, and the *dayah* community was now in the ascendant and had control over many local government institutions, such as the MPU, Badan Dayah and Dinas Syariat,[11] as well as non-governmental organizations. A number of laws (law No. 44/1999 on the formation of sharia, law No. 11/2011 regarding Aceh's special status and law No. 18/2001 concerning Acehnese special autonomy) gave the MPU unprecedented authority because it granted the MPU the power to govern religious affairs in Aceh as an official institution, in particular when it comes to oversight and support of the application of sharia law. When called upon to provide a fatwa on the application of sharia law,[12] the MPU issued fatwa No. 4/2007 concerning the principles for the identification of heresy.[13] The fatwa specifies a number of criteria for heresy and declares thirteen acts legally forbidden. These included undertaking the interpretation of the Qur'ān and the Sunna in a way that contravenes mainstream principles (paragraph 6), and accusing someone of being an infidel without providing divine and rational evidence (paragraph 13).

Fatwa No. 4/2007 has been problematized by many activists within Aceh, including the Yayasan Lembaga Bantuan Hukum Indonesia ("The Indonesian Legal Aid Foundation"), or YLBHI, who criticize the fatwa on the basis that it is the result of the misinterpretation of religious texts and that it threatens pluralism and democratic principles. Specifically, they argue it misrepresents Wahhabis, and this means that it has the potential to ignite horizontal conflict. The YLBHI also argued that the rules stipulated within the fatwa have major drawbacks, such allowing the Islamic majority to exercise power over a minority group. There have, in fact, been a number of occasions on which this fatwa can be clearly seen to have facilitated this dynamic, such as the cases of Tgk Ayyup in Plimbang[14] and Tgk Barnawi in Southeast Aceh.[15] In the first case, which took place in Plimbang Bireun in 2012,

Tgk Ayyub was publicly accused of being a heretic by traditionalists. People from the neighboring area amassed in his village, and conflict broke out between the crowd and his followers, which in turn led to a riot and the murder of Tgk Ayyub and his apprentices. Similarly, in May 2005, Tgk Barnawi was also accused of heresy and was likewise murdered. Since these events the YLBHI has urged the MPU to act responsibly to bring an end to intolerance and violence against minority groups, as Fatwa No. 4/2007 has played a role in igniting *(media pendorong)* horizontal conflict[16] and allowed the dominant group to hegemonize a minority, which eventually fails the ultimate objective of sharia, that is, social justice.

Between 2004 and 2015, anti-Wahhabi sentiments grew incrementally in Aceh,[17] with the conflict between Wahhabism and Ashʿarism reaching its peak between 2012 and 2015. Following the MPU's investigation into *aliran sesat* ("Heresy sects") after the release of fatwa No. 4/2007, the MPU issued another fatwa, No. 09/2014, entitled *Pemahaman, Pemikiran, Pengamalan dan Penyiaran Agama Islam di Aceh* ("Perception, thought, practice and propagation of Islam in Aceh"), concerning the condemnation of Wahhabi-Salafi teachings (for which see Appendix 1). It is clear from the first two sections of this fatwa that there are two issues that were of concern to the MPU, creed and rituals; in a third section, the MPU gave their recommendation that, having carefully examined the Wahhabi-Salafi creed,[18] they had concluded that Wahhabi-Salafi Islam is heretical. This fatwa, too, led to mass mobilization against Wahhabis and their mosques. As reported in previous studies,[19] there was a sizeable movement that wanted to take control of Wahhabi-managed mosques as a direct consequence of the 2014 fatwa, and, in the years immediately after the fatwa was issued, from 2014 to 2018, the horizontal conflict between Wahhabis and traditional Ashʿaris only intensified. Many Wahhabi mosques were forcibly relinquished, in particular in North Aceh, Lhokseumawe, Pidie and Banda Aceh, and this was followed by the first and the second Parades of Baiturrahman, which targeted the management of Baiturrahman mosque.[20]

The heresy charges against Wahhabi Qurʾan translations

Fatwa No. 09/2014 has received vehement criticism from Wahhabi-Salafi and non-governmental organizations. According to this fatwa, there are four aspects of the Wahhabi-Salafi creed that are claimed to be heretical and/or blasphemous:

a The belief that God's essence is located only in heaven (on His Throne/*ʿarsh*), which is condemned as misguiding believers.
b The belief that the essence of God is determined by time, place and direction.
c The belief that God's speech (*kalam allāh*) manifests itself in letter and voice.
d The belief that the prophets Adam and Idrīs only belong to the category of *anbiyāʾ* (prophets) and not to the category of *rusul* (messengers) of God (as opposed to the other prophets who are both *anbiyāʾ* and *rusul*).

The fatwa clearly indicates that ASWAJA, which effectively represents the *dayah* community, today exercise their power through the vehicle of the MPU. It has a

number of serious consequences: first, it privileges the dominant group's method of interpretation (and hence translation) and accuses Wahhabi-Salafi and other minority translations of heresy; second, it bans Wahhabi teachings and their representation of God; third, it encourages mass mobilization for attacks on, and movements to seize, mosques managed by Wahhabis; and finally, it outlaws and silences Wahhabi and other minority intellectual resources by designating them as heretical. The fatwa also shows that issues related to Qurʾanic exegesis and Qurʾan translation, especially with regard to the anthropomorphic attributes of God, had gained predominance over matters of ritual in the conflict between traditionalists and reformists. The case of Ustaz Firanda, who was expelled from Banda Aceh by an ASWAJA mob, is a striking example of the relevance of the dispute over the anthropomorphic verses in the Qurʾan.[21] Ustaz Firanda was invited to give the sermon (*pengajian*) at Al-Fitrah Mosque in Banda Aceh. However, when he arrived at Sultan Iskandar Muda International Airport, he was met by a mob organized by the ASWAJA, who had been incited by accusations that he was promoting anthropomorphistic teachings. He was eventually forced to return home without even leaving the airport. Following the protests, the al-Fitrah mosque was also seized and its management was eventually taken by the ASWAJA.[22]

There are a number of anthropomorphic verses in the Qurʾan that have historically been disputed by the two main players in this conflict. Of these, Q 20:5, *al-Raḥmānu ʿalā l-ʿarshi stawā* ("[He is] The Most Merciful [who is] above the Throne established") is one of the most controversial. Wahhabis signify the term *istawā* by interpreting it according to its literal meaning, whereas the ASWAJA all agree to use either *ijmālī* ("general") or taḥṣīlī ("detailed") metaphorical interpretations so as to avoid anthropomorphism. However, although WahhabiSalafis tend to translate the verse in terms of its literal meaning, they approach this meaning via the *tawqīfī* ("suspending") method, which allows them to also deny any anthropomorphic signification.

To better understand the nuance behind both parties' representation of God in their interpretation and translation of this verse, I refer to M.B. Hooker's explanation of translation. In 1988, Hooker published a seminal book entitled *Islam in South-East Asia* in which he discussed the translation of Islam in this particular region. In his introduction, on "The Translation of Islam into South-East Asia", Hooker puts forward the idea that in the specific South-East Asian context, translation means the expression of "an idea (conveyed in word or sentence) in other language [sic]. . . . It is not merely a semantic construction but a redefinition which may of course be either original or merely a paraphrase".[23] Later, he elaborates further on this definition of translation, describing it as being

> the means through which the absorption of principle came to result in the formation of an original South-East Asia dimension for Islam. [The concept of "translation" means] to move from one condition to another, to turn from one language to another either by simply making a version or by use in a metaphorical sense, or by interpretation and explanation. It can also mean to enrapture or to entrance, as well as to change form and appearance.[24]

A more critical, and broader, perspective has been adopted by Ronit Ricci, who argues that "translation" is an English term which has no equivalent in any other language.[25] In relation to South-East Asia, she points out that any discussion of the translation of Islam in the region must make reference to the local context, since every culture has its own distinctive and unique features when it comes to conceptualizing translation. She therefore prefers to use a broader definition of translation, which covers the English meaning as well as local practices and usage. Another important point Ricci makes is that the translation of Islam in the region is also inextricably linked with the actual process of Islamization. Given this, before discussing the content of the accusations against the Acehnese Wahhabis and their responses in more depth, I will now remark on the relationship between translation, representation and hegemony in the Acehnese cultural context.

Translation, representation and hegemony

Before I go on to discuss the relevance of inculcation to religious hegemony in the translation of anthropomorphic verses, it is helpful to explain further the mechanism of Hall's theory of representation. Hall theorizes that the work of representation is inextricably linked with hegemony over minority groups through the use of devices such as stereotypes, labeling and naming. He defines representation as the process of the production of meaning through "language", "conceptual maps" and "cultural codes". Here, "language" is used in a broad sense that does not just include words but incorporates every sign that has meaning for human beings (for example, music, traffic lights or pictograms). "Conceptual maps" are culturally shared systems of understanding the relationships between "concepts"; "concepts" referring here to a thing signified by a sign and including both abstract things such as angels or souls, or concrete things such as trees, stones and tables. Language and conceptual maps are connected into a network by specific cultural codes, which signpost a culturally specific constellation of meaning. Thus, representation is the process by which we link together our conceptual map of the world and the meanings we construct through language.

Given this, any socio-cultural group must necessarily be concerned with representation, both with regard to their own constitution of meaning and with regard to the power dynamics that are brought into play by any particularly dominant group within their specific cultural context. Therefore, the practice of representation is linked to hegemony. Hall builds on his theory of representation by asserting that the misrepresentation of a particular identity, whether it be deliberate or accidental, is likely to lead to the production (or "fixing") of a false identity for the particular group. Stereotyping and labelling illustrate two such types of misrepresentation. When it comes to understanding the representation of a specific ethnic group's religious practice, the previous discussion raises some interesting questions about the role of ideas about Acehnese culture and identity within teaching practices and curriculum content pertaining to Islam.

Hall advances the idea that "positioning" and "negotiation" are key concepts through which we are able to measure whether or not a particular group is the

oppressed object of cultural hegemony. Hall borrows Gramsci's concept of hegemony and defines cultural hegemony as the "spontaneous consent given by great masses of the population to the general direction imposed on social life by the dominant fundamental group". According to this systematization, any subordinate groups or individuals are manipulated and persuaded to board the "dominant fundamental express".[26] Hall thus argues that representation is inextricably linked with ideology and identity. In *The Whites of Their Eyes: Racist Ideologies and the Media* (1981), he proposes that the media is a fundamental source of ideological production and dissemination, generated through the production and use of languages or symbols. He also posits that ideological influence is inescapable: all social discourse inevitably involves power and ideology. Our understanding is always ideological; we "speak through" ideology and that ideology enables us to "make sense" of our social reality and our position within it.[27] Like ideology, which directs our understanding through representation, our cultural identity is also constructed and engineered in terms of representation:

> Representation, here, is closely tied up with both identity and knowledge. Indeed, it is difficult to know what "being English", or indeed French, German, South African or Japanese, means outside of all the ways in which our ideas and images of national identity or national cultures have been represented. Without these "signifying" systems, we could not take on such identities (or indeed reject them) and consequently could not build up or sustain that common "life-world" which we call culture.[28]

When it comes to the discourse surrounding the translation of the anthropomorphic verses of the Qurʾan in Aceh, the concept of ideology is an important notion through which to understand how one group's ideology is represented in terms of the use of religious language and speech. Similarly, the concept of hegemony is a useful one for this chapter, when it comes to exploring which interpretation(s) are dominant and thus which particular groups or identities are privileged or marginalized in the discourse on Qurʾan translation.

Historical precedents

Disputes over the interpretation of the Qurʾan's anthropomorphic verses are not a recent phenomenon in the Islamic world, and this is particularly true of Aceh. While there might be no direct link between events during the early period of Islamization in the seventeenth century CE, the golden age of the Acehnese sultanate, and those that have occurred since 2005, the memory of theological conflicts in Acehnese history resonates with contemporary ulama and Acehnese Muslims.

Naquib Al-Attas has argued that the Islamization of Southeast Asia had strong connections with issues of language and translation. During the time of the Acehnese sultanate (1496–1903), many Acehnese scholars concerned themselves with Qurʾanic exegesis and translation. According to Peter Riddell,[29] the first anonymous translation of parts of the Qurʾān into the local language, Malay, can be dated

to around 1600, while ʿAbd al-Raʾūf al-Singkilī (d. 1693) was the first scholar to translate the entire Qur'ān into Malay, in a work named *Tarjumān al-Mustafīd*.[30] Since these early beginnings, many other scholars have produced Qurʾanic commentaries, right up until the modern day, and the discipline has developed various culturally specific modes and methods. For instance, some translators (such as al-Singkilī) have restricted themselves to using mainstream *tafsīr* methodology, while others have attempted to translate the Qur'ān into poetry (for examples of which, see Tgk H. Mahjiddin Yusuf's *Al Quran al Karim Terjemah Bebas Bersajak dalam Bahasa Aceh*,[31] *Tafsir Al-Baqarah* by Muhammad Ali Irsyad,[32] and *Tafsir Pase*).[33]

In addition to translations of and commentaries on the Qurʾan, all of which have to address the issues raised by the Qurʾan's anthropomorphic verses, many Sufi manuals also tackle the representation of God, for example, the works of Ḥamzah al-Fansūrī[34] and Nūr al-Dīn al-Ranīrī (d. 1658).[35] Such literature on Islamic mysticism has drawn attention to several subjects of controversy: the issues of *waḥdat al-wujūd* or monism, blasphemy, heresy and the esoteric meaning of sacred texts. For example, in the seventeenth century, al-Ranīrī disputed al-Fansūrī's teachings on a number of important issues, mainly the representation of God and the idea of *waḥdat al-wujūd*, and wrote a large number of books to establish his arguments against Fansūrī's teachings on *waḥdat al-wujūd*.[36] He also criticized al-Fansūrī's followers on the basis of his legalistic, scripturalist approach to the translation of Qurʾanic statements concerning God.

Al-Singkilī responded to the vehement dispute on *wahdat al-wujud* between the followers of al-Fanṣūrī and al-Ranīrī by searching for a middle ground.[37] He argued against al-Ranīrī's fatwa, which condemned to death everyone who believed in *waḥdat al-wujūd* but had an exoteric approach to Qur'ān translation. Religious discourse during al-Singkilī's time, often perceived as the golden age of Aceh, was quite different from that of modern times, when Wahhabis have become notable opponents to Ashʿaris. Several scholars have expressed the view that the religious discourse between al-Fansūrī and al-Ranīrī has nowadays been inextricably linked with modern ideas of reformist Islam, such as the origin of Wahhabi teachings.[38]

In the twentieth century, although the issue of the representation of God was still debated, religious disputes shifted to issues relating to traditional rituals and local practices, such as *seuneujoh, peusijeuk* and several *ibadah sunah* such as *qunut* and the *rakaʿāt* of the *tarāwīh* prayer during Ramadan, as mentioned earlier. However, by the 2000s, the long-contested doctrinal issue of anthropomorphism had returned to the forefront, and this led to increasing mutual accusations of heresy and unbelief. Both Wahhabis and Ashʿaris used their translation of anthropomorphic and other verses to assert the superiority of their ideology as part of this debate. For instance, a number of modern Ashʿaris, including Sirajuddin, postulate that Wahhabi translations of anthropomorphic verses, as well as Ibn Taymiyya's exegetical reading of these, are heretical and blasphemous.[39] Similarly, some Wahhabi scholars claim that the Ashʿari method of translating anthropomorphic verses is false and subject to errors. Specifically in the recent Acehnese context, however, the debate has involved a significant power imbalance which has enabled traditionalist scholars to misrepresent their opponents' view.

The misrepresentation of the Wahhabi method of translation

In Islamic theology, the Qurʾanic verses that appear to ascribe anthropomorphic attributes to God – such as those mentioning Him as having hands, a face, and occupying a position in space, or being stationed on a Throne – are often called *āyāt mutashābiha* or "ambiguous verses". This is not because the terms they use are ambiguous; there is no disagreement over the meaning of terms such as *yad* ("hand") or *ʿarsh* ("Throne"). Rather, it is because their apparent meaning is in conflict with the general rejection of divine anthropomorphism, or *tanzīh allāh*.

All Islamic theological schools of thought agree that divine anthropomorphism must be rejected; they merely pursue different approaches to resolving the conflict between the wording of the Qurʾan and their theological position. For instance, Ibn Taymiyya used the same terms as the Qurʾan to describe God (*istiwāʾ, wajh, yad*, etc.) but negated their signification by using the formula *bi-lā kayfa* ("without asking how", or "without knowing what it means"), which signifies unquestioning acceptance.[40] Since the Wahhabi approach is based on the same objective as that of Ibn Taymiyya, namely, to negate anthropomorphism, Wahhabi-Salafis believe that their acceptance of the terminology of the Qurʾan is not heretical and should not be forbidden.[41] For this reason, I argue that that their interpretation as heresy by Fatwa 09/2014 of the MPU is a misrepresentation that has been used to justify the oppression of an Islamic minority in Aceh, as has been argued by the Indonesian Legal Aid Foundation (YLBHI).[42]

Let us consider the first decree of the fatwa through which Wahhabi Salafis are charged with heresy, the belief that God's essence is located only in heaven (on His Throne/*ʿarsh*), which is condemned as misguiding believers.[43] Responding to the fatwa, Acehnese Wahhabi Salapis[44] vehemently disagreed with the verdict and countered it by issuing a scholarly legal response (a *Buku Putih Naskah Akademik*).[45] Their response relies heavily on a book by Ḥanbalī scholar Ibn Qudāma al-Maqdisī (1147–1223), entitled *Ithbāt ṣifat al-ʿuluww*,[46] which offers probably the most comprehensive collection of traditions ascribed to the prophet and his companions on the subject of *istiwāʾ* and the station of God in heaven. The book contains a great number of traditions: thirteen hadiths, 34 reports about pre-Islamic prophets and religious figures, twenty *āthār* (statements by the prophet's companions), eight testimonies from successors and 24 opinions from renowned scholars of Islamic jurisprudence.

On the basis of arguments underpinned by this book, Wahhabi Salapi representatives from Pulo Raya village urged the MPU board to reconsider the fatwa. Authored by Harist Abu Naufal, Imam Abu Abdillah and Adam Abu Rifky, their response document denies that the belief that God is on His heavenly Throne constitutes heresy since it is confirmed by the Qur'ān, the prophets' traditions and statements from many great religious authorities. However, the response does not address the traditional Ashʿari scholars' claim for dominance. It thereby fails to resolve the conflict between both groups, although it is well grounded in Salafi literature, the opinions of authoritative scholars and quotations from the Qurʾan and Hadith. I interviewed several scholars who were involved in the process of drawing

up the fatwa, a process which itself elicited much debate and controversy,[47] and they also agreed that the fatwa tends to be used as an ideological vehicle to uphold hegemony.

Based on Q 20:5 and 42:11, the Wahhabi Salapi respondents argued that belief in the concept of God on the Throne in Heaven is rightful as evidenced by the first of these two verses. The manner of His position in Heaven is, however, unknown, as is posited by the latter verse. It is impossible for this to be knowable in a way that makes sense to human perceptions, since human knowledge is restricted to things that we can sense, whereas God is beyond human imagination and human senses: "nothing is like unto Him" (Q 42:11). According to the Wahhabi Salapis, this is the true belief as advocated by the Prophet and upheld by the companions, successors, and the founders of the Sunni schools of Islamic law. To support their claim, they cite from Muḥammad al-Faḍīl al-Qūṣī's study on Ibn Taymiyya's doctrine *Mawqif al-salaf min al-mutashābihāt bayn al-muthbitīn waʾl-muʾawwilīn*,[48] arguing that this was also the creed followed by such figures as Sufyān al-Thawrī, Abū Ḥanīfa, Mālik and Aḥmad b. Ḥanbal. They cite Ibn Ḥanbal's words, "Yes indeed, He is on His Throne and nothing is free from His knowledge", and also Mālik's statement that "Allah is in heaven, and His knowledge is ubiquitous and nothing is free from His knowledge".[49]

Concerning the second argument of the heresy charges against Wahhabi Salapi teachings, related to their belief that the essence of God is determined by time, direction and space, Wahhabi Salapis objected to the accusations and claimed that the MPU had misunderstood their teachings and misled the public.[50] In their response, the Wahhabi Salafi representatives Abu Naufal, Abu Abdillah and Abu Rifky denied that Salafis teach that God is determined by time, direction and space. On the contrary, they maintain that their teaching is that God is "purified" from those attributes and that their beliefs are entirely based on the Qur'ān and Sunnah. According to their own claims, they are, therefore, in full submission and obedience to what God and the Prophet commanded and forbade.[51]

A critical analysis of the fatwa and its references shows that the authors of the fatwa were influenced by later Ashʿari beliefs on the spatial direction (*jiha*) of God. They claim that belief in God's *jiha* presupposes the belief in God's position in time and space, a claim which has been rejected by Ibn Rushd, who states that God's occupying a direction (*jiha*) does not necessarily rely on His occupying a time and place. The Salafis believe that God is in Heaven, but they do not believe that He is determined by time, space and direction. They were not involved in the Graeco-philosophical debate about *jawhar* (substance) and *ʿaraḍ (accident)* and the occupation of time and space but rather advocate total submission to the verse that mentions *istiwāʾ*. They claim that, like the *salaf*, they suspend any interpretation of anthropomorphic terms and believe that only God knows their correct interpretation.

Judging from the sources referenced in the response and their translations of the relevant terms, the beliefs held by Acehnese Wahhabi Salapis are closely related to Ibn Rushd's argument, and their interpretation of the relevant verses is based in Salafi exegesis, specifically Ibn Taymiyya's interpretation. As mentioned earlier,

Ibn Taymiyya uses the formula *bi-lā kayfa* when interpreting this verse, and this is inextricably linked with Abu Ḥanīfa's argument on *istiwāʾ* that "There was Allah *taʿāla* and there was no place, even it was before creating any creation, there was no whereabout, nor creation, nor thing, but He is the creator of everything."[52] Their translations of *istiwāʾ* are also in line with Imām Mālik's interpretation of the term: Imām Mālik argues that while the literal meaning of *istiwāʾ* is known, its underlying significance is not, and asking about it is an illicit innovation (*bidʿa*).[53]

Thus, the Wahhabi Salapi interpretation-*cum*-translation of anthropomorphic verses is in line with the teachings of both Ibn Taymiyya and Ibn Rushd. They agree on accepting the concept that God has a *jiha*, but they reject any further interpretation that would support divine anthropomorphism. Al-Qūṣī points out that earlier Ashʿaris were in agreement with the *salaf* until they were influenced by Muʿtazili translations and therefore started rejecting *jihah* and preferring an allegorical interpretation.[54] Therefore, to sum up, the Wahhabi Salapi interpretations/translations of *jihah* are essentially in line with the interpretation of earlier religious authorities and are against divine anthropomorphism. Any accusation of heresy is therefore effectively being made against the interpretative tradition regarding anthropomorphic verses established in the time of the earlier Ashʿaris, the *salaf* and Ibn Taymiyya rather than against the modern-day Wahhābī-Salafī movement. Local Wahhabi Salapis agree with that tradition, and thus their response to the fatwa is to urge for its retraction. They believe that the accusations of heresy in the fatwa are not correct and have been used for the political reason of furthering the interests of traditionalists who wish retain dominion over minority Muslim groups, including the Wahhabis.[55]

The chief, the elders and the grand imam of Pulo Raya village supported the Wahhabi Salapi representatives by sending a letter requesting the reconsideration of the fatwa document. In it they mention three main issues of concern: the validity of the fatwa, its reliability and finally the consequences that would stem from it. On the first point, they questioned the validity of the fatwa on the grounds that it is inconsistent and does not meet the standard requirements for scholarly research and referencing.[56] Furthermore, they argued, its content does not represent the teachings followed by the Wahhabi Salafi community in Pulo Raya village,[57] and the fatwa does not address the core of the dispute over the translation of anthropomorphic attributes. As for reliability, the response document points out that this fatwa strongly contradicts the earlier 04/2007 fatwa in terms of the identification of criteria for heresy charges. They point to, in particular, chapter IV of that fatwa, which cites the criteria for heresy as disbelieving in the six pillars of *īmān* and five pillars of Islam, and believing in doctrines that are against the teachings of *ahl al-sunna wa'l-jamāʿa*.[58] More importantly, they highlighted the fact that the new fatwa might generate horizontal conflicts since it opens the way for and justifies violence against Wahhabi Salapi communities.

The representatives of the Wahhabi Salapis and the chief of Pulo Raya also went so far as to explain publicly, on the local radio station Serambi Indonesia, that their teachings do not contravene the Qurʾan or the Sunna, in a news item that was titled *Ini Klarifikasi Wahhabi* ("This is a clarification from the Wahhabis").[59] During this

program, they set out their position that the MPU had treated the Wahhabi Salapi representatives sent to discuss the fatwa unfairly and that they were now being punished with heresy charges. According to their narrative, the representatives were summoned to the MPU's office and interrogated, without being given a chance to respond to any of the claims and accusations made, and the verdict against them was handed down unilaterally. Most importantly, the Wahhabi Salapi representatives urged that there be public dialogue and debate on the subject to allow them to prove that their teachings are not heretical.

Conclusion

While the existing literature on the anthropomorphic verses in the Qurʾan is extensive and focuses particularly on different methods and approaches to their interpretation and translation, the issue of domination and power relations through the practice of assigning meaning is addressed less frequently. Given that the translation of the Qur'ān is influenced by the views of its translators, those views are necessarily the determining factor behind the representation of each Qurʾanic term concerning God in translation. The interpretation, and therefore translation, of such terms is inextricably linked with the theological views of the exegete and/or translator. As such, the dispute over the meaning of these verses holds the potential to generate social divisions, which, in turn, means that a specific translation may become associated with representation and power relations and can be employed to generate cultural hegemony and domination.

This chapter has provided an overview of the interpretation of anthropomorphic verses on the part of both Wahhabi Salapi and Ashʿari groups in Aceh and how differing interpretations have led to conflict over their translation on the part of Wahhabi Salapi and Acehnese ulama consultative boards, as demonstrated in fatwa no 09/2014, as well as addressing both factions' justification of their respective readings of these verses. As the MPU is dominated by *dayah* ulema, it has been used as a powerful vehicle to further traditional scholars' interests over those of other branches of Islam. It is commonplace among the *dayah* community to accuse the Wahhabi Salapis of anthropomorphism, and this belief has motivated the *dayah* ulema to incite the MPU to issue a fatwa against the Wahhabis. This fatwa, which is greatly influenced by the stance of later Ashʿaris such as Ibn Ḥajar, al-Subkī and al-Ramlī, who vehemently opposed Ibn Taymiyya, has then been used to justify domination of and violence against Wahhabi Salapis in Aceh.

Notes

1 Q 2:191: "And kill them wherever you overtake them and expel them from wherever they have expelled you, and fitnah is worse than killing. And do not fight them at al-Masjid al-Haram until they fight you there. But if they fight you, then kill them. Such is the recompense of the disbelievers". Q 9:5: "And when the sacred months have passed, then kill the polytheists wherever you find them and capture them and besiege them and sit in wait for them at every place of ambush. But if they should repent, establish prayer, and give zakah, let them [go] on their way. Indeed, Allah is Forgiving and Merciful"

(Saheeh International). For further details, see Abdallah El-Khatib, "Lost in Translation: The Ideological Effects of the Translator and the Interpreter on the Qur'ānic Text", *Aligarh Journal of Quranic Studies* 1, no. 1 (2018), 1–21.

2 There is a degree of uncertainty around the term "Wahhabism". Many scholars use "Wahhabism" and "Salafism" interchangeably, while other scholars are of the view that Wahhabism is not a subset of Salafism. In general, unfortunately, Wahhabism remains a poorly defined term. In this work, Wahhabism is broadly defined as the teachings and doctrines which are promoted by the Saudi state. The term Wahhabism encompasses a) Salafi theology, which is rooted in the works of Ibn Taymiyya, Ibn Qayyim and Aḥmad ibn Ḥanbal, b) Islamic law and jurisprudence grounded in Aḥmad ibn Ḥanbal's methodology and c) the methods of *daʿwa* which are based on Muḥammad b. ʿAbd al-Wahhāb's doctrines.

3 For a full overview, see Saifuddin Dhuhri, "The Text of Conservatism: The Role of Abbas' Ahl al-Sunnah wa al-Jamāʿah in Underpinning Acehnese Current Religious Violence", *Studia Islamika* 23, no. 1 (2016), 29–59; Jajat Burhanudin, "History, Authority, and Power: A Case of Religious Violence in Aceh", *Journal of Indonesian Islam* 8, no. 1 (2014), 112–138.

4 *Dayah* was introduced at the beginning of Acehnese cultural emergence in Southeast Asia. When travelers or missionaries (*dāʿī*) from the Arab world, Gujarat and other regions of the Indian subcontinent came to Aceh, they established Islamic education institutions, later called *dayah*, in order to Islamize the region and to establish Islamic teachings and knowledge. Although there is little hard evidence to support this, the Acehnese believe that Islamic traditional education in the Southeast Asia region originated in Aceh. Whether or not it did first emerge in Aceh, Islamic education began to spread there in the tenth century and reached its peak of development in the sixteenth century, which has historically been viewed as the Golden Age of Islamic education in the area. For example, it is said that Dayah Baiturrahman was a university that comprised seventeen faculties. Another *dayah*, Dayah Cot Kala, was the first center of Islamic higher education in Southeast Asia and made a massive contribution to the spread of Islam throughout the archipelago, producing many scholars who became *dāʿī* throughout the region and disseminated Islamic knowledge. This *dayah* thus played an important role in Acehnese history and was central to the Islamization of the Acehnese community, because its alumni would go on to establish their own *dayah* in areas where Islam was not yet the dominant religion. In modern Aceh, the *dayah* community has been also known by the anacronym ASWAJA, an abbreviation that refers to the *ahl al-sunna wa'l-jamāʿa* and traditionalist Muslims. For further reading, see Saifuddin Dhuhri, *Dayah: Menapaki Pendidikan Warisan Endatu, Aceh* (Banda Aceh: Lhee Sagoe Press, 2014).

5 R. Michael Feener, *Shariʿa and Social Engineering: The Implementation of Islamic Law in Contemporary Aceh, Indonesia, Islamic Law and Society* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2013).

6 See Teuku Ibrahim Alfian, *The Ulama in Acehnese Society: A Preminary Observation* (Darussalam: Pusat Pelatihan dan Penelitian Ilmu-ilmu Sosial, 1975); IAIN Jami'ah Ar-Raniry, *Laporan Penelitian: Pengaruh PUSA terhadap Reformasi di Aceh* (Banda Aceh: Lembaga Research dan Survey, 1978); Hamdiah A. Latif, *Persatuan Ulama Seluruh Aceh (PUSA): Its Contributions to Educational Reforms in Aceh* (MA thesis, Montreal: McGill University, 1992).

7 *Peusijuek* is a traditional initiation or blessing performed for well-being in which the performer cast spells in order to bless the recipient. The ritual requires a number of ingredients, such as fresh leaves, rice and water.

8 Feener, *Shariʿa and Social Engineering*.

9 Feener, *Shariʿa and Social Engineering*; Moch Nur Ichwan, "Official Ulema and the Politics of Re-Islamization: The Majelis Permusyawaratan Ulama, Shari'atization and Contested Authority in Post-New Order Aceh", *Journal of Islamic Studies* 22, no. 2 (2011), 183–214; Aslam Nur, "Ulama dalam Dinamika Sosial Masyarakat Aceh di Awal

Abad Kedua Puluh Satu", *Humaniora* 23, no. 3 (2011), 315–325; Arskal Salim, "Politics, Criminal Justice and Islamisation in Aceh", *ARC Federation Fellowship Islam, Syari'ah and Governance Background Paper Series no. 3* (Melbourne: Melbourne University Press, 2009).

10 John R. Bowen, *Muslims through Discourse* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1993); James T. Siegel, *The Rope of God* (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1969); Dhuhri, "The Text of Conservatism".

11 Badan Dayah ("*Dayah* Body") is a state office regulating *dayah* education and its affairs. It is similar to local government offices, which were introduced as a part of Acehnese special status in education as mandated by Indonesian law no. 44/1999 concerning the special status of Aceh. Dinas Syariat Islam/DSI (State Shari'a Agency) is another state office based on the law assumes a coordinating function in working with the other local institutions, such as the shari'a courts (Mahkamah Shari'a/MS), the Consultative Council of Ulama/MPU and the shari'a police (Wilayatul Hisbah/WH).

12 To resolve the vertical conflict, the central government of Indonesia granted the province of Aceh the right to implement Islamic law, which is called shari'a. This right is enforced by law no. 44/1999 that formally recognized the special status of Aceh in the fields of religion, education and customary law (*adat*), and law no. 18/2001 that gives the province broader powers of self-governance.

13 As the fatwa had vehemently been rejected by Wahhabis, ASWAJA were forced to empower the existing fatwa through a Surat Edaran Gubernur (instructive letter from the Governor), followed by regent letters concerning Wahhabi activities, particularly those written by Bupati Bireun, Aceh Besar and Wali Kota Banda Aceh. The Edaran is meant to enhance the fatwa by forbidding any activities (*pengajian*) by Wahhabi persons.

14 Mustiqal Syah-Putra, *Hasil Diskusi Tinjauan Yuridis Terhadap Kedudukan Fatwa Majelis Permusyawaratan Ulama Aceh (Satu Kajian Normatif Terhadap Fatwa MPU Aceh Terkait Dengan Aliran Sesat di Aceh)* (Banda Aceh: Yayasan Lembaga Bantuan Hukum Indonesia [YLBH] 2015), 3, 10–11.

15 Syah-Putra, *Hasil Diskusi Tinjauan Yuridis*, 4–5, 10–11.

16 Syah-Putra, *Hasil Diskusi Tinjauan Yuridis*, 6.

17 For further details see Dhuhri, "The Text of Conservatism"; Saifuddin Dhuhri, "Peusijuek; Sebuah Tradisi Ritual Sosial Masyarakat Pasee dalam Perspektif Traditionalis dan Reformis", in *International Conference on Aceh and Indian Ocean Studies II Civil Conflict and Its Remedies* (Banda Aceh: Asian Research Institute, 2009), 2–25.

18 In order to collect data concerning the fatwa, I interviewed several Wahhabi-Salafi leaders to cross-check the information that was reported by local ulama and MPU in Pidie, which are in charge of the case of Titeui.

19 Dhuhri, "The Text of Conservatism"; Burhanudin, "History, Authority, and Power"; M. Nur El-Ibrahimy, *Tgk. M. Daud Beureueh; Peranannya dalam Pergolakan di Aceh* (Jakarta: Gunung agung, 1982).

20 Mosque Baiturrahman is situated at the heart of Banda Aceh city, and it is the largest mosque and the icon of Aceh. It symbolizes Acehnese history and the pride of the Acehnese people since it represents Aceh in its Islamicity. Traditionalists believe that the performance of *ʿibāda* in the mosque should be based on ASWAJA's teaching, since it represents the whole people of Aceh, whereas now it is based on Wahhabi teachings. Therefore, they incite mass protest and mobilization to seize the management of the mosque.

21 See www.bbc.com/indonesia/indonesia-48617536 and www.kaskus.co.id/thread/5d058163349d0f7d34151aef/gaduh-saat-pengajian-firanda-andirja-di-aceh-ini-kronologisnya/, accessed 10 February 2023.

22 See https://portalsatu.com/menjaga-ukhuwwah-islamiah/, www.harianaceh.co.id/2020/02/09/tanggapan-terhadap-pembubaran-pengajian-dan-perebutan-masjid-oman-dan-sejumlah-masjid-lainnya-di-aceh/, www.ajnn.net/news/aksi-pemukulan-juga-sempat-terjadi-di-dalam-masjid-al-fitrah/index.html, accessed 10 February 2023.

23 M.B. Hooker, "Introduction: The Translation of Islam into South-East Asia", in *Islam in South-East Asia*, ed. M.B. Hooker (Leiden: E.J. Brill, 1988), 12.
24 Hooker, "Introduction", 3. For a comprehensive overview, see M.B. Hooker (ed.), *Islam in South-East Asia* (Leiden: E.J. Brill, 1988); M. B. Hooker, *Indonesian Islam: Social Change through Contemporary Fatāwā* (Australia: Allen & Unwin, 2003); Ronit Ricci, *Islam Translated: Literature, Conversion, and the Arabic Cosmopolis of South and Southeast Asia* (London: The University of Chicago Press, 2011).
25 See Ricci, *Islam Translated*, 31–34.
26 In relation to Gramsci's definition, Peter McLaren defines hegemony as "the maintenance of domination not by the sheer exercise of force but primarily through consensual social practices, social forms, and social structures produced in specific sites such as the church, the state, the school, the mass media, the political system, and the family". McLaren, *Life in Schools: An Introduction to Critical Pedagogy in the Foundations of Education*, 5th ed. (Boston: Allyn & Bacon, 2006), 173.
27 Stuart Hall, "The White of Their Eyes: Racist Ideologies and Media", in *Gender, Race, and Class in Media: A Text-Reader*, eds. Gail Dines and Jean Humex (Thousand Oaks, London, and New Delhi: Sage Publications, 1995).
28 Stuart Hall, "Introduction", in *Representation: Cultural Representations and Signifying Practices* (London, Thousand Oaks, and New Delhi: Sage Publishions, 1997), 5.
29 Peter Riddell, "Aceh in the Sixtenth and Seventeenth Centuries: 'Serambi Mekkah' and Identity", in *Verandah of Violence: The Historical Background of the Aceh Problem*, ed. Anthony Reid (Singapore, Seattle: Singapore University Press, University of Washington Press, 2006); Peter G. Riddell, "The Implanting of Islam in Southeast Asia", in *More Islamic that We Admit: Insight into Philippine Cultural History*, ed. I. Donoso (Quezon City: Vibal Foundation, 2017).
30 For further reading, see: Abdurrauf al-Singkili, *Tarjumān al-mustafīd: tarjama tafsīr al-Bayḍāwī bi'l-lugha al-jāwiyya* (Cairo: Muṣṭafā al-Bābī al-Ḥalabī, 1951); Peter Gregrory Riddell, *Abd al-Rauf al-Singkili's Tarjuman al-Mustafid: A Critical Study of His Treatment of juzʾ 16* (PhD thesis, Canberra: The Australian National University, 1984).
31 Mahjiddin Yusuf, *Al Quran al Karim Terjemah Bebas Bersajak dalam Bahasa Aceh* (Banda Aceh: Pusat Penelitian dan Pengkajian Kebudayaan Islam, 2017).
32 Ali Irsyad, *Irsyadu al-Akharin ila Ma'ani al-Quran al-Kariem* (Teupin Raya: Daru al-Saadah, 1970).
33 Hasan Basri T.H. Thalhas, Zaki Fuad, Mufakhir Muhammad, and Mustafa Ibrahim, *Tafsir Pase; Kajian Surah al-Fatihah dan Surah-suarah dalam Juz Amma* (Jakarta: Bale Kajian Al-Quran Pase, 2001).
34 Syed Muhammad Naquib al-Attas, *The Mysticism of Hamzah Fansuri* (Kuala Lumpur: University of Malaya Press, 1970); Hamzah Fansuri, *Zinatul Muwahhidin* (Banda Aceh: Dinas Kebudayaan, Pemerintah Nanggroe Aceh Darussalam, 2005); Abdul Hadi, *Tasawuf yang Tertindas: Kajian Hermeneutik terhadap Karya-Karya Hamzah Fansuri* (Jakarta: Paramadina, 2001); Abdul Salam Muhamad Shukri and Ridwan Arif, "The Role of Shaykh Abd Al-Ra'uf Al-Fansuri in the Reconciliation of Sufism and Sharīʿah of the 17th Century Malay World", *Al-Shajarah* 23, no. 1 (2018), 207–245.
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36 Nūr al-Dīn al-Ranīrī, *Al-tibyān fī maʿraifat al-adyān*, trans. Mohd. Kalam Daud (Banda Aceh: Pena, 2011); Daudy, *Syeikh Nuruddin Ar-Raniry*; Daudy, *Allah dan Manusia dalam Konsepsi Syeikh Nuruddin Ar-Raniry;* John Bousfield, "Islamic Philosophy in South-East Asia", in *Islam in South-East Asia*, ed. M.B. Hooker (Leiden: E.J. Brill, 1988), 92–129.

37 For a detailed illustration, see Shaykh Muḥammad Zayn b al-Faqīh Jamāl al-Dīn, *Bidāyat al-hidāya: Sharḥ matn ummal-barāhīn* (Pattani: Maṭbaʿat Bin Halābī, n.d.), which mentions the burning of Hamza al-Fanṣūrī's, Shams al-Dīn al-Sumaṭrāʾī's and Sayf al-Rijāl's works.

38 For further reading see, Azyumardi Azra, *The Origin of Islamic Reformism in Southeast Asia: Networks of Malay-Indonesian and Middle Eastern ʿUlamāʾ in the Seventeenth and Eighteenth Centuries* (Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press, 2004); Daudy, *Syeikh Nuruddin Ar-Raniry*.

39 See for details Sirajuddin Abbas, *Iʿtiqād ahl al-sunna waʾl-jamāʿa* (Jakarta: Pustaka Tarbiyah, 1995); Sirajuddin Abbas, *40 Masalah Agama*, vol. 4 (Jakarta: Pustaka Tarbiyah Baru, 2009); Dhuhri, "The Text of Conservatism".

40 For further reading, see Binyamin Abrahamov, "The 'Bi-lā Kayfa' Doctrine and Its Foundations in Islamic Theology", *Arabica* 42, no. 3 (1995), 365–379.

41 For instance, al-Qūṣī argues that Ibn Taymiyya's method (*al-manhaj al-lughawī*) is not heresy. Therefore, it is futile to charge its adherents as heretics, since they share the same purpose in translating the *āyāt mutashābiha*. Muḥammad ʿAbd al-Faḍīl al-Qūṣī, *Mawqif al-salaf min al-mutashābihāt bayna l-muthbitīna waʾl-muʿawwilīn: Dirāsa naqdiyya li-manhaj Ibn Taymiyya* (Cairo: Dār al-Quds al-ʿArabī, 2016).

42 See Syah-Putra, "Hasil Diskusi Tinjauan Yuridis terhadap Kedudukan Fatwa Majelis Permusyawaratan Ulama Aceh (Satu Kajian Normatif terhadap Fatwa MPU Aceh terkait dengan Aliran Sesat di Aceh)", https://123dok.com/document/zxo39e4z-diskusi-tinjauan-yuridis-kedudukan-majelis-permusyawaratan-kajian-normatif.html, accessed 10 February 2023.

43 The concept of heaven or God's Throne (*ʿarsh*) is inextricably linked with theological debates about how to interpret and translate such anthropomorphic verses, particularly when it comes to the term *istiwāʾ* that is used to denote God's station above the Throne in Q 7:54, 20:5 and 32:4.

44 The term *Wahhabi Salapi* refers to the community who are living in Lamlo, Pidie and of the Mosque al-Taqwa Gampong Pulo Raya in Titeui. I interviewed several MPU members and found that senior MPU members use the term "Salafi" with a distinctive "p" instead of "f" to refer to this community.

45 See *Al-bayān al-ʿilmī ʿalā fatāwā majlis mushāwarat al-ʿulamāʾ, Atshih*, no. 9 (2014), https://dodiabuabdillah.wordpress.com/2014/08/22/download-penjelasan-ilmiah-terhadap-fatwa-majelis-permusyawaratan-ulama-aceh-mpu-aceh/, accessed 10 February 2023.

46 Muwaffaq al-Dīn b. Qudāma al-Maqdisī, *Ithbāt ṣifāt al-ʿuluww* (Medina: Maktabat al-ʿulūm waʾl-ḥukm, 1988).

47 Minority scholars who are also associated with the Muhammadiyah disagreed with the fatwa with regard to several issues, as discussed in this chapter. I undertook interviews with four UIN scholars, one of whom was a leading member of MPU Aceh, on 3 November 2018, in Banda Aceh. Further to this, I also interviewed a scholar from a Muhammadiyah background on 18 January 2019. The other person I interviewed are two senior lecturers who are specialists in Islamic jurisprudence and law and in the philosophy of law, respectively. I interviewed both of them on 4 November 2018.

48 Al-Qūṣī, *Mawqif al-Salaf*.

49 Al-Qūṣī, *Mawqif al-Salaf*, 28.

50 This was also confirmed by several interviewees who work at MPU and are representatives of the modernist Muslim faction among the MPU's members, and also by some academics.

51 See the response by Imam Abu-Abdillah Harits Abu-Naufal, Adam Abu-Rifky, *Al-bayān al-ʿilmī ʿalā fatāwā majlis mushāwarat al-ʿulamāʾ, Atshih*, no. 9, 2014, 8.

52 Abū l-Muʿīn Maymūn b. Muḥammad al-Nasafī, *Baḥr al-kalām fī uṣūl al-dīn* (Cairo: Maṭbaʿat Kurdistān al-ʿilmiyya, 1329 H.).

53 Translated from the original Arabic *al-istiwāʾ maʿlūm wa-kayfiyyatuhū majhūl wa-suʾāl ʿanhū bidʿa*.
54 Al-Qūṣī, *Mawqif al-Salaf*, 65.
55 I interviewed Rijal and Mukhlis who were involved with the Wahhabi group and have been familiar with the mosque of Pulo Raya, Titeui, on 13 July 2018. They confirmed the findings mentioned previously.
56 For a detailed study, see the letter requesting the reconsideration of the MPU fatwa: Riduan Abdullah, Anwar, "Surat Permohonan Peninjauan Kembali: Fatwa Majelis Permusyarawatan Ulama Aceh Nomor 09 Tahun 2014 tentang Pemahaman, Pemikiran, Pengamalan dan Penyiaran Agama Islam di Aceh", ed. Pemerintah Gampong Pulo Raya (2014), https://app.box.com/s/60xui5bjgzbqyll94uqa, accessed 10 February 2023.
57 Pulo Raya is a village located in Titeui-Keumala, Pidie. In the village, there is a small mosque that is a center of Wahhabi teaching and community activity, whereas in its surroundings, ASWAJA mosques and *dayah*/*pesantren* are located that are the basis of the traditionalist community. The presence of Wahhabi in the village has challenged ASWAJA's activities.
58 Wahhabi-Salafis are of the view that another serious weakness with this fatwa is that it contradicts the fatwa concerning Salaf/Salafism that was issued by the MUI Jakarta dated 8 April 2009. That fatwa concludes that Salafism is not heresy. See Pandangan Majelis Ulama Indonesia Kota Administratif Jakarta, *Salaf/Salafi*, https://archive.org/stream/FatwaMuiTentangSalaf/fatwa-mui1_2_djvu.txt, accessed 10 February 2023, and the reply document by Harits Abu-Naufal, *Al-bayān al-ʿilmī*, 5–8.
59 See http://aceh.tribunnews.com/2014/08/22/ini-klarifikasi-salafi, accessed 10 February 2023.

4 Vernacularism and the embers of conservatism

The production and politicization of Qurʾan translations

Fadhli Lukman

Introduction[1]

Conventions surrounding the printing of the Qurʾan and its translation in modern Indonesia have changed considerably since the first quarter of the twentieth century, alongside the increasing use of Latin script by Dutch-influenced intellectuals. Having received a secular education in colonial schools, some of these modern intellectuals felt the need for a translation of the Qurʾan that would satisfy their particular religious interests. Unlike their traditionally educated counterparts, they had no competence in Arabic or the Islamic scholarly disciplines, which meant that they could only read the Qurʾan in translation if they wanted to understand its message. That trend continues up to this day, making Qurʾan translation tremendously important for Indonesian society. In earlier times, theologians stipulated that any translation of the Qurʾan should always be written alongside the original Arabic text, but it is very common today to find a translation of a particular verse without the Arabic source text, for example, in internet memes, marketing posters for certain products or widely read essays and articles in books, magazines, newspapers and online media. This reflects the extent to which the use of the Qurʾan in translation is nowadays embraced by the Indonesian public, as well as the role that the Qurʾan plays at a societal level.

The increasing use of Qurʾan translations in Indonesia is thus closely connected to a growing desire among the Muslim community to engage with the Qurʾan at a hermeneutical level.[2] Indonesian Muslims are no longer satisfied with the traditional form of engagement with the Qurʾan, which was limited to using it in a performative aspect, namely in recitation and prayer. Growing literacy rates mean that there are nowadays a large number of literate Muslims who are interested in the meaning of each verse of the Qurʾan. Thus, the increasing number of Qurʾan translations produced in Indonesia goes hand in hand with the rise of a middle class who use religious symbols and activities as a means of self-identification. The educated middle class has a strong presence on social media, where many Indonesian Muslims quote, write and share reflections on a particular Qurʾanic verse or translation. The availability of the Qurʾan and its translation online also make it extremely easy to integrate hermeneutical activity surrounding the Qurʾan with social media: while

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the interpretation of the Qurʾan is commonplace in *madrasa* or *pesantren* circles, social media and the circulation of the Qurʾan in translation let Muslims outside those realms of religious scholarship engage in Qurʾanic hermeneutical activity.

Despite this expanding social engagement with the Qurʾan in translation, studies on the topic are somewhat rare, a gap that this chapter aims to fill. This chapter discusses two interrelated aspects of Qurʾan translation in Indonesia. The first part will explore the production history of *Al-Qur'an dan Terjemahnya* (lit. "The Qurʾan and Its Translation"), the state-produced translation of the Qurʾan, the first volume of which was published in 1965, including paratextual elements such as stylistic and layout decisions. The second part will elaborate on how translations of the Qurʾan and the history of their production have influenced "popular hermeneutics" – in the Indonesian context – that is, the hermeneutical reception of these texts by those who read them. I use the term "popular hermeneutics" here to point to the fact that these Qurʾan translations have a distinctive readership, the non-specialist layperson. In contrast to traditional religious circles, which consist either of established ulama or students, who access the meaning of the Qurʾan through the Islamic intellectual tradition (that is, pre-modern works of *tafsīr* [Qurʾanic commentaries], mostly in Arabic), popular hermeneutical engagement with Islamic scripture in Indonesia is based on translations of the Qurʾan.

My point of departure in this chapter is that *Al-Qur'an dan Terjemahnya*, the Qurʾan translation published by the Ministry of Religious Affairs, substantially defines Qurʾan translation in Indonesia. The discussion starts with a brief description of the history of *Al-Qur'an dan Terjemahnya*, in which I argue that this translation predominates over other translations on the market today and is the most important translation in the country. An overview of the production history of *Al-Qur'an dan Terjemahnya* makes up the next section. In this section, its role as an institutionalized Qurʾanic commentary will be the subject of discussion, and ideas relating to notions of authorship in translation and how these have impacted *Al-Qur'an dan Terjemahnya* will be evaluated. The third section provides an analysis of the development of layout decisions over time. Finally, in the last section, I will discuss how Qurʾan translations such as *Al-Qur'an dan Terjemahnya* contribute to the shaping of popular hermeneutics and what this says about the role of translation in society. I argue that the constant presence of Qurʾan translations, especially after 1990 when production started on an industrial scale, has led to the rise of vernacularism, which further contributes to the conservative turn in the post–New Order era. The translation functions, metaphorically speaking, as fuel for the embers of conservatism, which are periodically fanned into flame by the gusts of socio-political disputes. Given *Al-Qur'an dan Terjemahnya*'s status as the most influential Qurʾan translation in the country, the dynamics of the translation process during its creation have inevitable fed into a "popular hermeneutics", and, because this translation introduces its readership to only one specific, narrow set of interpretations, it acts to help keep conservative ideas alive throughout society. Every once in a while, a socio-political tremor acts as a gust of wind that fans the flames and makes sparks fly, resulting in recurring interpretive disputes with regard to the Qurʾan. Anyone relying on Qurʾan translations will inevitably have limited

knowledge about anything that goes beyond the scope of the interpretative tradition represented within that translation (or translations), and they are conditioned to accept the meaning of the Qurʾan as represented in the translation as the prime source of their religious thought.

Al-Qur'an dan Terjemahnya: a preeminent translation

Engagement with the Qurʾan has a long history in Indonesia, much longer than the Indonesian state itself. The earliest surviving textual evidence of this engagement dates to the end of the sixteenth century and consists of a fragment of Q 58 included within a manuscript, together with a complete copy of the Arabic Qurʾan with a colophon in Javanese that was probably written in between 1550–1575. Around this time, Hamza Fanṣūrī (d. 998/1590), Shams al-Dīn al-Sumaṭrāʾī (d. 1039/1630) and Nūr al-Dīn al-Rānirī (d. 1658) included translations of individual verses in their writings. The oldest surviving extended commentary written in the region was an anonymous manuscript of Q 18 that probably dates back to the early seventeenth century and is now kept in the Cambridge University Library Collection (MS Or. li.6.45). The first known full commentary of the Qurʾan came later in the form of ʿAbd al-Raʾūf al-Singkilī's (d. 1104/1693) *Tarjumān al-Mustafīd*.[3]

The growing importance of the Latin script form of the Malay language (then formally named *Bahasa Indonesia*) in the early twentieth century created a new stage in the production of Qurʾan translations. Fueled by a reformist tendency that made understanding the meaning of the text a requirement for believers, Tjokroaminoto (1882–1935) led the way in the 1920s with his efforts to translate the English translation of the Qurʾan by the prominent Ahmadi scholar Muhammad Ali into Malay. Many other translators followed suit: Ahmad Hassan's *Al-Furqaan: Tafsir Quraan* made its appearance in 1928, the same year that the Indonesian language acquired ideological significance as the national language of a future Indonesian state; Mahmud Yunus followed this with his translation in 1935,[4] and Halim Hasan in North Sumatra in 1937. Indonesia's declaration of independence in 1945 further bolstered the position of Latin-script *Bahasa Indonesia* across the country, and many more translations were undertaken by scholars such as Zainuddin Hamidy, Fakhruddin Hs., H.M. Kasim Bakri and Hasbi Ash-Shiddieqy, to name only a few.[5] It is also worth mentioning that before independence some translations into local languages were published, and it appears that this trend did not cease entirely after independence.[6]

Qurʾan translation played a significant role on the national stage soon after independence and became a vital policy issue, as is evidenced clearly by the introduction of *Al-Qur'an dan Terjemahnya*, the Qurʾan translation produced by the Ministry of Religious Affairs. The first president of Indonesia, Sukarno, set in motion an initiative to publish an official Qurʾan translation of the state during the Guided Democracy period in the 1960s, based on the mandate from the MPRS (*Majelis Permusyawaratan Rakyat Sementara*, Provisional People's Consultative Assembly) No. II/MPRS/1960. This initiative was highly political. Sukarno wanted to represent himself as the leader of Muslims amidst an atmosphere of

growing distrust in him because of his close association with communism, a movement that Muslims leaders consider to contradict Islam. Even though the development agenda also includes the scriptures of other religions, the translation of the Qurʾan is the only one that has actually been realized.[7]

In 1963 the Minister of Religious Affairs established an ad-hoc committee specifically for the purpose of compiling a translation of the Qurʾan, namely Lembaga Penyelenggara Penterjemah Kitab Suci Al-Qur'an (The Organizing Committee for the Translation of the Holy Scripture of the Qurʾan), which was led by R.H.A Soenarjo as chairman and included thirteen other members. The members of the committee were religious scholars from state-funded Islamic higher education institutions in Jakarta and Yogyakarta, including the *mufassir* (exegete) Hasbi Ash-Shiddieqy (1904–1975) and the future Minister of Religion during the Suharto's administration, A. Mukti Ali (1923–2004). In addition to this, another team was brought together under a Ministerial Decree (1 June 1963, No. 56) and tasked with printing the translation. The first edition was divided into three volumes: the first two volumes were published during the period of Sukarno's reign in 1965 and 1967, respectively, and the last volume was published in 1970, shortly after Suharto had assumed the presidency. In 1971, *Al-Qur'an dan Terjemahnya* was printed as a single volume for the first time, as has been the case ever since. Having been continuously reprinted for almost six decades, the translation underwent three revisions, in 1990, 1998–2002 and 2016–2019. During this period, *Al-Qur'an dan Terjemahnya* has assumed different political dimensions under different ruling governments under the Old Order, the New Order and the Reformasi era.

Al-Qur'an dan Terjemahnya is undeniably the most important Qurʾan translation in modern Indonesia. First of all, not only is it composed and repeatedly reviewed by notable scholars in the fields of Qurʾanic and Islamic studies, it also has the privilege of being the official translation of the state. Official religious state events, such as Islamic commemoration days, are opened by a recitation of the Qurʾan and its translation, that is, *Al-Qur'an dan Terjemahnya*. A number of Islamic higher education institutes require students to quote from *Al-Qur'an dan Terjemahnya* when referencing Qurʾanic verses. The translation is also used in the mass media and publications by Muslim intellectuals. The privilege that comes with its official status projects an aura of authority onto the translation above and beyond its hermeneutical dimension. This projection of authority is discernible, for example, in cases when Indonesian Muslims have explicitly announced during court cases that their reference to *Al-Qur'an dan Terjemahnya* was motivated by the fact that this was the translation authorized by the state.[8]

In addition to this, the industrial level of production of *Al-Qur'an dan Terjemahnya* makes it accessible to a far broader readership than any other translation, probably by an enormous margin. The right to print the translation was the exclusive prerogative of the Ministry up until 1990 when private publishers demanded to be involved. Since then, the scale of the copies of *Al-Qur'an dan Terjemahnya* printed has risen significantly, more than that of any other translation. The Ministry itself prints a limited number of copies, while the Qurʾanic Text Review Board (LPMQ, Lajnah Pentashihan Mushaf Al-Qur'an), the sub-unit of the Ministry that

since 1982 oversees the Qurʾan translation project, has a list of licensed private publishers that are allowed to print *Al-Qur'an dan Terjemahnya*. There is also a high degree of probability that unlicensed publishers are producing their own copies. As a result, the distribution of *Al-Qur'an dan Terjemahnya* by local publishing houses has reached an estimated seven to ten million copies per year.[9] This number does not account for the entire production of this translation, however. The King Fahd Complex for Printing the Holy Qurʾan in Medina, Saudi Arabia, also has a license to print *Al-Qur'an dan Terjemahnya*, which they distribute as a gift to Indonesian pilgrims each year. It is unclear how many copies they actually produce, but, to put this into perspective, the King Fahd Complex produces about ten million copies of the Arabic Qurʾan annually for worldwide distribution[10] and Indonesia sends approximately two hundred thousand pilgrims to Saudi Arabia annually.[11]

Given this, it is hardly surprising that the influence of *Al-Qur'an dan Terjemahnya* entirely overshadows that of other Indonesian Qurʾan translations. Today's readers might no longer be familiar with the translations of Zainuddin Hamidy, Fakhruddin Hs., H.M. Kasim Bakri or Hasbi Ash-Shiddieqy, because they have not been reprinted for some years. The works of Ahmad Hasan and Mahmud Yunus have survived, as can be seen by the fact that their translations are still being reprinted (interestingly with some adjustments, although the authors passed away a long time ago) and are available, yet they are quite hard to find. Further to these, some new translations have emerged lately, such as *Al-Qur'an dan Maknanya* by Quraish Shihab, *Al-Qur'an Karim Tarjamah Tafsiriyah* by Muhammad Thalib and some other works produced by groups of translators for particular Qurʾan publishers, all of which are substantially modified versions of *Al-Qur'an dan Terjemahnya*. However, none of them are successful enough to compete with *Al-Qur'an dan Terjemahnya*. In addition, very few translations into regional languages are printed widely, and their influence is thus limited to specific communities, as with the case of the Javanese works *al-Ibrīz* ("The Pure Gold") and *al-Iklīl* ("The Crown"). Even though the Ministry of Religious Affairs has started to produce *Al-Qur'an dan Terjemahnya* in regional languages, these editions are not in the market.[12] This makes *Al-Qur'an dan Terjemahnya* the primary determinant in defining the growing impact of Qurʾan translation in Indonesia today.

The government translation of the Qurʾan: an anonymous text

Despite the fact that the Qurʾan has been translated by Muslims for centuries,[13] this is a contentious issue among Muslims on both a theoretical and practical level; a concern that re-emerged in a new light in the twentieth century, when the enthusiastic *daʿwa* of the Ahmadiyya movements,[14] print culture and modern statehood brought forth a wave of new translations that had a broader reach than before.[15] Contemporary writings in *ʿulūm al-Qurʾān*, the sciences of the Qurʾan, derive their concept of Qurʾan translation from a modern understanding of translation and sometimes from the history of the Biblical translation,[16] viewing Qurʾan translation as a literary act that creates a substitute or equivalent for the Arabic Qurʾan[17] rather than from the well-known blessing bestowed by the Prophet Muḥammad on Ibn

ʿAbbās, describing him as the *tarjumān al-Qurʾān* ("interpreter of the Qurʾan") and thereby linking the concept of *tarjamah* (translation) to exegesis. The notion of creating a text that substitutes for the Qurʾan was, and still is, considered theologically reprehensible. According to the mainstream view, the Qurʾan is the word of God and hence superior to all other texts or discourses. Conversely, a translation of the Qurʾan is only the product of human beings. With this in mind, translation of the Qurʾan (in the modern sense) is considered an inherently ambiguous or paradoxical practice.[18]

Repudiation of the idea of translating the Qurʾan is also related to the complex dynamic between two different epistemologies concerning the nature of the Qurʾan and its translation, namely whether it is *riwāya* (report/narration) or *tafsīr*. Traditional Arabic accounts of the history of the Qurʾanic canon suggest that the Qurʾan was transmitted through *riwāya* – narration through chains of transmitters – to preserve its authenticity. From this perspective, every single transmitter and his/her recipient are believed to have transmitted the actual word of God. As such, *riwāya* defines the ontology of the Qurʾan as a word-for-word divine revelation. This conception seems to have influenced the way many scholars approached the concept of translating the Qurʾan. The idea of the untranslatability of the Qurʾan was also closely connected to the doctrine of *iʿjāz al-Qurʾan*, or the inimitability of the Qurʾan, which was ascribed to the Arabic text exclusively. Conceiving of translation within the framework of *riwāya*, the practice of translating of the Qurʾan may be understood as a transmission of the Qurʾan in a form other than that which God revealed to the Prophet Muhammad. Consequently, it would be considered a deviation from the original Qurʾan.

The same attitude was prevalent in Indonesia: traditionally the local ulama did not entertain any possibility of allowing the translation of the Qurʾan. This stance is reflected, for example, in letters written by Raden Ajeng Kartini, the daughter of a regent in Central Java who later became a celebrated feminist figure in the late nineteenth century. In her letters, she highlights her frustration with being asked to be religious while the primary source of religious knowledge was considered untouchable and untranslatable.[19] That there were strong reservations against Qurʾan translation is also evident from the fact that Sayyid ʿUthmān (1822–1914), a Dutch-allied scholar, condemned a Qurʾan translation into Javanese. He requested that the translation be burned and the translator repent in a brochure distributed in 1909 entitled *Ḥukm al-Raḥmān bi ʿl-Nahy ʿan Tarjamat al-Qurʾān* ("The Law of the Lord of Mercy on the Prohibition of Translating the Qurʾan").[20] Mahmud Yunus, in the 1930s, also faced objections to his efforts to publish a Qurʾan translation, despite his claim that he had obtained the approval of his teacher at al-Azhar.[21] Up until at least the 1960s, a degree of hesitation in accepting the concept of Qurʾan translation was still noticeable in the fact that many translators described their work as *tafsīr* instead of *terjemah* ("translation"), despite incorporating only minor interpretive interpolation in their works.[22]

There has however been a marked shift in attitudes to Qurʾan translation. The spread of reformist ideas about the centrality of the Qurʾan to Muslim belief, thought and practice has led to perceptions of a growing need to be able to access

its meaning. Muslims have increasingly been encouraged to seek out the Qurʾan's guidance directly. Rising demand in the Muslim world for the individuals to be able to understand the Qurʾan, as opposed to merely reciting it, has consistently provided an impetus to produce Qurʾan translations on both a local and global scale. These developments have pushed theologians to redefine their conception of Qurʾan translation so that, instead of seeing translations as an illegitimate version of the Qurʾan in a language other than Arabic, religious scholars have begun to conceive of the translation of the Qurʾan as an individual intellectual process of engagement with the Arabic Qurʾan. This view brings the concept of Qurʾan translation closer to Qurʾanic exegesis, or *tafsīr*.[23] Discussions of Qurʾan translation are no longer dominated by concerns surrounding the transmission (*riwāya*) of the scripture, and the question of whether it is permissible to read the Qurʾan in translation in daily prayer has ceased to be relevant. Instead, translation is examined for its interpretive dimension. Labeling a Qurʾan translation as *tafsīr* signifies that the translation process is the work of human beings attempting to understand the word of God, rather than provide a substitute for it, and therefore removes concerns about the possible modification of the Qurʾan. Just as *tafsīr* is the intellectual work of a *mufassir*, the translation of the Qurʾan is that of a translator.

Given this development, it makes sense to suggest that the shift of perspective on the nature of Qurʾan translation from *riwāya* to *tafsīr* has brought about moderation on the side of those opposed to the idea of Qurʾan translation. This explains the fact that objections to the translation of the Qurʾan written by Tjokroaminoto, the leader of Sarekat Islam, in 1925, were mainly based on his affiliation with the Ahmadiyya rather than the text's nature as a translation of the Qurʾan. Tjokroaminoto's source text was *The Holy Qur-án* by Muhammad Ali (1874–1951), one of the most prominent scholars of the Ahmadiyya community, a group that was not readily accepted by Indonesian Muslim communities, especially after the arrival of the Qadyani branch, which adopted a polemical strategy to win over converts to their community.[24] Bashuni Imrān (1893–1981) of Sambas, a disciple of Rashīd Riḍā (1865–1935), brought the issue to an international level when he wrote to Riḍā to ask for a fatwa on the subject of whether Tjokroaminoto's translation was permissible. Riḍā's answer is especially significant in that it was concerned more with the theological leanings of the translation, which favored the beliefs of the Ahmadiyya, than with the concept of translation itself, which he did not seem to view as problematic.[25] Riḍā's response implied that as long as a particular Qurʾan translation conformed to widely accepted interpretive views, there would be no longer be any need for controversy over the act of translation itself. This, in turn, explains Indonesian Muslims' eventual acceptance of the translations by Ahmad Hassan and Mahmud Yunus that were published shortly after the controversy around Tjokroaminoto's project.

Conceptualizing a translation of the Qurʾan as a *tafsīr* means that it is no more than an auxiliary text that is produced by human beings. This in turn means that the concept of authorship is inherent to Qurʾan translations: the translation is typically attributed to its translator. That is precisely the case with those translations authored by individual translators, such as Ahmad Hasan, Quraish Shihab and Muhammad

Thalib, just as with the *tafsīrs* of figures such as al-Ṭabarī (d. 311/923), al-Bayḍāwī (d. 791/1319) or Fakhr al-Dīn al-Rāzī (d. 604/1207). As an intellectual enterprise, the author of any Qurʾan translation takes full responsibility for their work and receives support and criticism from other intellectuals. Inevitably, this means Qurʾan translations are subject to extensive studies, some of which criticize the decisions of the authors to a degree that establishes them as a "series of failures rather than as a dynamic and crucial chapter in the history of the Qurʾan and Muslim intellectual life".[26]

In this regard, *Al-Qur'an dan Terjemahnya* is an anomaly. The emergence of nation-states in Muslim-majority societies such as Indonesia has evidently contributed to reshaping the trajectory of Qurʾan translation. In several cases, states have proactively aimed to become involved in the production of such texts, but the Indonesian Ministry of Religious Affairs' *Al-Qur'an dan Terjemahnya* was produced from scratch. Instead of being the result of an individual translator's intellectual labor, *Al-Qur'an dan Terjemahnya* is a translation overseen by an institution; the institution commissioned the translation, formed the oversight committee, issued general working guidelines and, finally, was responsible for the actual publication of the translation. *Al-Qur'an dan Terjemahnya* is not defined by and named after its translators. This is partly for political reasons, such as the fact that the first president Sukarno wanted to be conspicuously visible in the whole project in order to add to his authority, and partly due to the epistemological reason that this translation is the product of a committee that is formed by the state and works on the translation as a team. Each member is assigned a particular number of Qurʾanic verses and writes their individual translation or, in the case of later editions, individual revision. The translations of all members are then examined by the committee. Once the committee has agreed on the rendering of all the verses, the translation is submitted for approval to the Minister of Religion, as with the first 1965 edition, or to the National Congress of Ulama of the Qurʾan (*Musyawarah Kerja Nasional Ulama Al-Qur'an*), as was the case for the subsequent editions. Only after their approval is given does the edition go to print. This three-step writing process blurs the concept of authorship. That is to say, the individual contributions made by each member of the committee cannot be identified in the completed translation unless we have access to the initial writings of each translator before their work was integrated into that of the team. In fact, in the context of *Al-Qur'an dan Terjemahnya*, the individuals in the committee themselves do not seem to consider personal intellectual markers relevant. The concept of authorship is further obscured by the fact that this translation is not presented as the sum of the intellectual contributions of all the committee members but rather as the product of the Ministry of Religious Affairs, or even the Indonesian state.

This development has significant consequences. It results in a sense of anonymity, as if *Al-Qur'an dan Terjemahnya* had no translator(s). While the translators' names are mentioned in the first, second and Saudi editions of *Al-Qur'an dan Terjemahnya*, their presence serves as an acknowledgment for their services rather than to underline their intellectual contribution. This situation is exacerbated by the fact that the names of the individuals on the revision team scarcely figure in

press releases or media coverage. In fact, the most recent publications of *Al-Qur'an dan Terjemahnya* by private publishers do not provide the translators' names at all. Since this translation overshadows all others and hence has become a defining element of the notion of Qurʾan translation in modern Indonesia, *Al-Qur'an dan Terjemahnya* has changed the concept of Qurʾan translation in Indonesia from that of a personalized work to a seemingly anonymous text.

Layout development: from Qurʾan translation to *muṣḥaf* with accompanying translation

The layout, format and typeface of the *muṣḥaf* or its translation are rarely considered of much significance, and stylistic decisions made by a calligrapher or publisher relating to the specific form, color and ornaments used in a manuscript, a printed *muṣḥaf*, or a translation of the Qurʾan are generally overlooked. There is a tendency to assume that such paratextual elements have only aesthetic value, or, alternatively, they are seen as a marketing strategy designed to attract more buyers. However, there is more to it than that. The dynamics of the formatting and stylistic features of pre-modern Qurʾan manuscripts showcase that, in addition to artistic value, they also serve an interpretive and ideological function.[27] The same goes for classical and modern Qurʾan translations: the layout configuration of a Qurʾan translation is set in such a way that it appeals to the readers targeted by the translator or publisher.[28]

Although the main focus here is on Qurʾan translations, to gain a clearer perspective on the issue a brief historical overview of the printing and publication of the Qurʾan (*muṣḥaf*) in Indonesia is imperative. The reason for this is that, at some point, the printing of the Qurʾan and of its translation in Indonesia started to intersect. The earliest recorded *muṣḥaf* publication in Indonesia, and more generally in Southeast Asia, goes back to Haji Muhammad Azhari bin Kemas Haji Abdullah's lithographic edition in Palembang, which was completed on 21 August 1848. Azhari Printing, as his press is commonly called, printed several copies of the Qurʾan between 1848 and 1854; the 1854 copy is included in the collection of the National Library of the Republic of Indonesia (*Perpustakaan Nasional Republik Indonesia*) in Jakarta. Unfortunately, the range of the distribution and readership of the Azhari Qurʾan have yet to be explored, mostly due to a lack of available data. However, the most widely distributed *muṣḥafs* in the late nineteenth century were those printed in Singapore and Bombay (today called Mumbai). The Singapore edition was available in Palembang, Jakarta, Surakarta, Bali, Palu, Maluku and Johor, while the Bombay edition was available in Palembang, Demak, Madura, Lombok, Bima and the South Philippines. The Bombay edition appears to have had a wider circle of influence than the Singapore one, as *muṣḥaf*s printed in Indonesia since the early twentieth century consistently reproduced the Bombay edition, which continued to hold great importance until the 1970s. Additionally, although with a significant discrepancy in numbers, *muṣḥaf*s printed in Turkey (later called *muṣḥaf baḥriyya*) and Egypt were also distributed fairly widely throughout Indonesia as homecoming pilgrims imported them from Mecca. Because of their beautiful

calligraphy, and also for the *pojok/sudut* ("corner") feature[29] that effectively helped students memorize the Qurʾan, these *muṣḥafs* were reproduced in Indonesia. Eventually, both types of *muṣḥaf* contributed to the introduction of the Indonesian standardized *muṣḥaf* (*mushaf standar Indonesia*) in 1984[30] that is used by the entire Indonesian *muṣḥaf* industry. More recently, in the 2000s, advanced technology made it possible to adapt the Medina *muṣḥaf* composed by the calligrapher ʿUthmān Ṭāhā to the Indonesian standardized *muṣḥaf*. The result has dominated the market with its beautiful and easily readable calligraphy ever since.[31]

As mentioned earlier, the intersection between the printing of the Qurʾan and its translations is based on a theological point of view that requires the translation to be placed next to the original Arabic text to ensure that the translation does not function as a substitute for the Arabic Qurʾan.[32] This is also meant to emphasize the supremacy of the Arabic Qurʾan and the inherent dependence of the translation on the source text, implicitly stressing the concept that the Arabic Qurʾan is the word of God while the translation is the product of human beings. The printing of Qurʾan translations in Indonesia essentially conforms to this widely accepted theological position, combining the Arabic text and the translation. This creates issues in terms of layout that need to be resolved. As the increasing importance of Qurʾan translation in modern Indonesia paralleled a growing familiarity with, and use of, the Latin script in the first quarter of the twentieth century, the early versions of printed Qurʾan translations that used the modern Indonesian language combined two different scripts on one page: Arabic script for the source text and Latin script for the target text. As in other similar cases, the encounter between these two different styles of script with different writing directions on one page had implications for the layout of text and translation on the page. It was necessary to create a modern layout for Qurʾan translations that differed from the popular interlinear layout which had been widely used in classical translations when the translation was written in vernacular languages that used Arabic script.

As a result, early Qurʾan translations written in Latin script in Indonesia unanimously used tabular layouts. Examples of this layout include the *Al-Furqaan* of Ahmad Hassan (1928), *Tarjamah Al-Qur'an Karim* of Mahmud Yunus (1935) and *Tafsir Qurän* of Zainuddin Hamidy and Fakhruddin Hs (1958). In this layout, the Arabic source text and the Latin text of the translation are formatted in two columns facing each other on a single page. Unlike the traditional *muṣḥaf* in which the Arabic source text is written as a running text, in the tabular layout, each Qurʾanic verse is presented individually, and the translation is placed at its side. The same design was also used by *Al-Qur'an dan Terjemahnya*, and even when H.B. Jassin (1917–2000) introduced an initiative to reform the format of the translation, he continued using the same tabular layout. The Arabic text in Indonesian Qurʾan translations that used this tabular layout was technically a rearranged *muṣḥaf*, either Bombay or Bahriyyah, that was set to fit the layout design. When the standardized *muṣḥaf* was introduced in 1984, the printed version of *Al-Qur'an dan Terjemahnya* used the adjusted standardized *muṣḥaf* in a tabular layout.

The bilingual Qurʾan layout, however, has evolved beyond the tabular typesetting convention. Nowadays, the translation of the Qurʾan is typically printed in

what can be termed a "gloss" layout. According to this layout, the Arabic text is written as a running text that is placed in an inner box on the page while the translation flows around the box. Most recently, this gloss is even combined with the rejuvenated interlinear layout, where word-for-word rendition is provided below the Arabic Qurʾan.

Going back to the tabular layout described previously, the first decision the translator and publisher of earlier Qurʾan translations had to make when planning a tabular-format text was whether to retain the right-to-left reading direction. Usually, their choice was to switch it to left-to-right, as if to give the Latin script priority over the Arabic, most probably to give a strong hint to readers that what they read was not the Holy Qurʾan itself but rather an auxiliary text. In other words, at that point, they expected their work to be read as a translation, as a means to understand the message of God, rather than as a tool for liturgical recitation. Regarding the function of the tabular layout, it is reasonable to agree with Pink, who points out that the design conveys the expectation that the reader will compare the two texts in order to understand the meaning.[33] Should one intend to perform a confessional recitation, readers are not encouraged to do it by using such a printed Qurʾan translation since the tabular layout makes recitation less convenient than the traditional *muṣḥaf*, which presents the Qurʾan as a running text.

It is my contention that the more recent layout developments bring about different reading experiences and consequently different attitudes towards the Qurʾan and its translation. The shift from the left-to-right tabular layout to right-to-left gloss implies several interrelated significant messages. Unlike previous layouts, the currently favored layout emphasizes the idea of the primary function of the text as being a *muṣḥaf* rather than a translation. The shift of reading direction to right-to-left script, prioritizing the reading direction of the Arabic source text, clearly indicates that a certain kind of reading experience is expected from the reader, namely liturgical recitation. Not only does the current typesetting emphasize the ritual role of the Qurʾan, but it means that translation is also fully embedded into *muṣḥaf* printing now. We could describe the translation of the Qurʾan in its earlier tabular setting as one distinct category of printed Qurʾanic literature, where the translations contained the Arabic source text for theological reasons rather than out of practical necessity. However, that does not seem to be the case anymore in the current gloss layout. It is fully merged into the *muṣḥaf* in such a way that the result caters predominantly to the Qurʾan's liturgical role. Thus, the actual layout has shifted from presenting a Qurʾan translation that functions as an aid for comprehension to presenting, first and foremost, a *muṣḥaf* with an attached translation: the printed bilingual Qurʾan is no longer regarded as a Qurʾan translation but rather as a *muṣḥaf*.

Vernacularism and the spark of conservatism

Muslim religious discourses today are characterized by what Pink describes as "the new centrality of the Qurʾanic message", meaning that the Qurʾan, instead of tradition or traditional religious authority, is used as a core reference in debates about

the role of religion in society. As Pink states, "The Qurʾan, of course, has always been the sacred scripture of Islam but today it is central to Islamic discourses on belief, religious identity and moral behavior to a degree that it had never been before the late nineteenth century".[34] On the other hand, the majority of Muslims does not speak Arabic and therefore cannot access the message of the Qurʾan,[35] let alone the vast intellectual legacy of Islam, through the original source texts.

Due to the ever-increasing availability of Qurʾan translations on the book market and, recently, the internet, more Muslims than ever before are able to experience a direct relationship with the Qurʾanic message. Despite the unfamiliarity of most Muslims with Arabic and the traditional disciplines of Islamic learning, Qurʾan translations provide them with a source text that they can refer to in their religious practices. That is to say, the Qurʾan can now be understood through the representation of its meaning in translation, instead of through the original Arabic text. This is what I call vernacularism, a term which denotes the epistemology of making the vernacularized Qurʾan, instead of the original Arabic Qurʾan, the source of religious thought.

There are at least three characteristics of vernacularism. The first is that it underlies the "popular hermeneutics" of the Qurʾan. As already mentioned in the introduction to this chapter, popular hermeneutics reaches a far wider audience than religious scholarship. For a long time, the Arabic Qurʾan served a practical rather than hermeneutical function for the majority of people, in that it was recited as a part of daily worship. Those who had a good command of Arabic and were able to access to the Islamic intellectual heritage, specifically *tafsīr*, may have had a hermeneutical motivation for reading the Qurʾan, yet this readership has historically tended to be limited to the community of traditional Islamic scholars. Qurʾanic commentaries in Indonesian might have a significantly wider readership in Indonesia than the Arabic commentaries. Yet, they mostly still address intellectuals, albeit those working outside traditional religious communities. The vernacularized/translated Qurʾan, on the other hand, expands the scope of readership far more effectively: it crosses over traditional boundaries of communities of Islamic learning. The Qurʾan in translation is read by the general public, and they form the target audience at which these works are pitched. This marks a clear break from the traditional pattern of the relationship between Indonesian Muslims and scripture. Indonesian Muslims might always have had intimate forms of engagement with the Qurʾan, but it was mostly confined to performative aspects. Accessing and interpreting the message of the Qurʾan was the exclusive enterprise of traditional religious authorities or Islamic educational circles, who mediated the Qurʾanic message to the general public. Vernacularism cuts through this pattern, circumventing the religious authorities. In other words, reading the Qurʾan in translation provides Muslims with direct access to the Qurʾanic message, emancipating both text and reader from the influence of religious authorities.

Second, in vernacularism, there is an epistemological break between the producers and the audiences of the translation of the Qurʾan. On the part of the producers, it makes sense to classify Qurʾan translation as a subgenre of the *tafsīr* tradition,[36] to take the stance that a translation functions as a concise *tafsīr*

compendium. Recognizing Qurʾan translation as a subgenre of *tafsīr* means that the translation of the Qurʾan is always, or most of the time, in a dialectical relationship with the *tafsīr* tradition. When a particular translator attempts to translate the Qurʾan, they typically draw on the vast legacy of centuries of *tafsīr* scholarship in order to represent the meaning of a certain verse or word in the target language. The translator is, therefore, a *mufassir*. On the part of the audience, however, the translation has the effect of dissociating them from the *tafsīr* tradition with its wealth of different interpretations. This is where the epistemological break happens. It stems from the fact that, in most cases, the translator has to pick no more than one particular meaning from a number of possibilities. The reason a translator would prefer one particular meaning over another is not visible to the reader. As a result, the impression is created that the provided meaning is the only relevant meaning of the verse, and readers become isolated from other interpretative possibilities provided by the *tafsīr* tradition. At this point, while a translator is essentially a *mufassir*, providing their own personal interpretation of the Qurʾan, the readers of their translation are not the kind of audience that *tafsīr* works are written for. Readers of *tafsīr* are mostly expected to become future *ulama*, who will be exposed to many different works of *tafsīr*, engage with the tradition and understand the dynamics of the genre, but this is not necessarily the case for the readers of Qurʾan translations.

The third characteristic of vernacularism is that it creates a sense of sacralization of the actual process of Qurʾan translation. This sacralization is strongly related to the hermeneutical production of *Al-Qur'an dan Terjemahnya*, which creates an impression of authorlessness, and the choice of a layout that merges the translation into the *muṣḥaf*, two points discussed earlier. In addition to giving it the semblance of greater authority than other, individually authored translations, both of these features further dissociate *Al-Qur'an dan Terjemahnya* from its inherent origin in human agency. That the translation is printed as an embedded part of the *muṣḥaf* leads to a situation in which Muslims' respect for their *muṣḥaf* is projected onto the translation: they approach the Qurʾan translation as they approach the Qurʾan itself.

Due to the previously mentioned epistemological break and sacralization of Qurʾan translations, the process of vernacularism results in a situation where the status of the translation is elevated to the extent that it is perceived as transcending its human origins and becomes hermeneutically equal to the Qurʾan itself. This inevitably, given the monolithic reading of the Qurʾan presented in any single translation, also leads to an absolutist attitude towards the textual meaning of the Qurʾanic text. There is thus a clear parallel between vernacularism and textualism. Textualists, as Abdullah Saeed puts it:

> argue for a strict following of the text and adopt a literalistic approach to the text. For Textualists, it is the Qurʾān that should guide Muslims, rather than any so-called modern "needs." They consider the meaning of the Qurʾān to be fixed and universal in its application. For instance, if the Qurʾān says that a man may marry four wives, then this should apply forever, without any need to consider the socio-historical context in which this text was "revealed." For

> them, why the Qurʾān allowed a man to marry four wives in the first/seventh-century Hijaz is not important.[37]

Saeed's characterization of textualism and his examples also apply to vernacularism. The only difference is that, while the basis for the textualist approach is the original text of the Qurʾan, for vernacularism, it is the vernacularized Qurʾan. This difference cannot be underestimated, especially for non-Arabic-speaking societies. Textualism is a term relevant to religious elites who have in-depth knowledge of the Islamic intellectual legacy and the necessary tools to understand the message of the Qurʾan. Vernacularism, as indicated earlier, applies to a broader segment of society because it is based on the spoken language of the people.

The parallel between textualism and vernacularism provides us an entry point through which to discuss the connection between vernacularism and religious conservatism in Indonesia. Textualism has been dubbed the hermeneutical approach assumed by conservatives. Thus, Saeed, for example, suggests that the primary example of textualism can be found in the hermeneutical practices of those groups referred to as traditionalists and Salafis,[38] implying that both groups represent religious conservatism. Although the hermeneutical approach of both groups is different, Saeed seems to argue that both share a common ground, that is, a reliance upon the literal linguistic features of the source text. While Salafis find inspiration in the scripturalist-oriented hermeneutics of Ibn Taymiyya for their aspiration towards a more puritan outlook on religion which dismisses the scholarly views of traditional *ulama* and *mufassirūn*,[39] traditionalists strive to preserve a "pre-modern" religious outlook. They derive their religious perspectives from the linguistic characteristics of the text, but without adopting a puritan orientation or dismissing traditional religious authorities. Accordingly, Salafis and traditionalists differ in their understanding of the range of texts considered legitimate or authentic but share views on a number of cases such as polygamy and the status of women.

In the Indonesian context, Salafis provide a good example of the textualist tendency because of their scripturalist approach and are hence considered conservative. The categorization of traditionalists, however, is not as straightforward. Things become complicated once we take into account the development of Indonesian traditionalist thought, because some traditionalists have become leading advocates of a contextualist approach to the Qurʾan. To solve the problem, the approach of van Bruinessen would be viable, namely placing religious conservatism in contrast to the liberal and progressive intellectual movement. This perspective concerns itself more with the respective groups' views on practical subjects in Islamic thought than with precision in hermeneutics, allowing issues such as gender equality and religious pluralism to become possible measures to distinguish conservatives from liberals. In doing so, van Bruinessen defines religious conservatism as "various currents that reject modernist, liberal or progressive re-interpretations of Islamic teachings and adhere to the established doctrines and social order".[40] Accordingly, there are conservatives among both traditionalist and modernist groups, as is the case with liberals and progressives. With regard to the Salafis, van Bruinessen identifies them as fundamentalists who, however, share some views with conservatives.

Van Bruinessen believes that the landscape of Muslim life in Indonesia has been changing since 2005, a change that is marked by the increasing rejection of modernist and liberalist views which had found significant support until then. He and other authors who contributed to an edited volume on *Contemporary Developments in Indonesian Islam: Explaining the "Conservative Turn"* believe that the turn to conservatism in Indonesia stems from the influence of Islamic movements originating in the Middle East, specifically the Arabian Peninsula. "[R]eturning graduates from Saudi universities, Saudi-owned and Saudi or Kuwaiti-funded educational institutions in Indonesia, sponsored translations of numerous simple 'fundamentalist' texts, and ideological as well as financial support for transnational Islamic movements"[41] are among the variables he describes as being responsible for the growing tendency towards conservatism in major Muslim institutions and organizations in Indonesia. Thus, for van Bruinessen, conservatism in the post–New Order age reflects Salafi influences more than the traditionalist trend. This view is reasonable because traditionalism, in the context of Indonesian Islam, has evolved considerably to the extent that the two conflicting categories of traditionalism and modernism that existed in the early twentieth century have started to become blurred and less relevant. Since then, some young traditionalists have positioned themselves as defenders of contextualist approaches to the Qurʾan.

One of the main points van Bruinessen makes in his explanation of the conservative turn is to dissociate the rise of conservatism from the growing democratization of the country after the New Order regime stepped down. To link the conservative turn with democratization would imply that the majority of Indonesian Muslims are conservative, and that is not an assumption he seems to agree with. On the contrary, democratization, in his opinion, might establish a basis for liberal and progressive Islamic discourses due to the increasing involvement of organizations and institutions supporting intellectual debate and offering careers in politics. Conversely, it is my contention that the conservative turn is very much related to democratization. What prevents van Bruinessen and his colleagues from seeing this is the elitist framework of their analysis. They are mostly concerned with organizations and their leadership. At the same time, they underestimate the fact that the Muslim community in general is now very much engaged in debates about the meaning of the Qurʾan through the use of translation.[42] Scholars who do not take the phenomenon of Qurʾan translation into account miss an essential variable in the contemporary development of Indonesian Islam. This is where vernacularism becomes crucial.

I argue that vernacularism (and the part it plays in Qurʾan translations specifically) can be seen as fueling the flames of conservatism. This metaphor suggests that the translation of the Qurʾan plays a vital role in strengthening conservative ideas, or at least keeping them alive, although that influence may be hard to detect. Although the embers of conservatism are damped down most of the time, there is always a danger that the sparks will fly once the wind begins to blow, and vernacular translations only serve to add fuel to the fire. Any recurring disputes on any issue involving the interpretive dimension of the Qurʾan, whether they cause a

tremendous political tremor in the country or are limited to some random discussion on the internet, act as the wind that stirs the embers.

The tumultuous 2017 Jakarta gubernatorial election campaign is an instructive case that illustrates how vernacularism works as the spark of conservatism. On this occasion, sparks flew due to the issue of non-Muslim political leadership. When Joko "Jokowi" Widodo assumed the presidency after the national election of 2014 and left his office as governor of Jakarta, Basuki Tjahaja Purnama, a Christian of Chinese origins who was Jokowi's vice governor, stepped up as deputy governor for the rest of their term of office. From his first day as head of government of the Indonesian capital, Ahok, as he is better known, was the recipient of frequent visits from protesting Muslim hardliners from the Islamic Defenders Front (FPI, Front Pembela Islam) who opposed his position as (deputy) governor of the region due to his religious affiliation. By the time the next gubernatorial election approached, the protests heated up. In this situation, one particular Qurʾanic verse, Q 5:51, pervaded public discourse at a national level, especially after an allegedly blasphemous speech that led to Ahok being accused of making reference to the verse in a disrespectful manner.[43] The verse reads as follows:

> You who believe, do not take the Jews and Christians as *awliyāʾ*: they are *awliyāʾ* only to each other. Anyone who takes them as a walī becomes one of them – God does not guide such wrongdoers.[44]

A number of Qurʾanic commentaries and translations in Indonesia interpret Q 5:51 as an explicit prohibition of Christian leadership in the Muslim community.[45] The word *awliyāʾ* in this verse is translated using words that signify leadership (*ketua, pemimpin* or *wali*, all translating literally as "chairman" or "leader") in popular commentaries such as Hamka's (d. 1981) *al-Azhar* and the translation of Mahmud Yunus. Similarly, *Al-Qur'an dan Terjemahnya* translates it as *pemimpin-pemimpin* (leaders). However, the third edition of the latter translation changed the rendering of *awliyāʾ* to *teman setia* (loyal friend), shifting the sense of the verse from the prohibition of appointing non-Muslims as leaders to having them as loyal friends. In the case of the 2017 Jakarta gubernatorial election, the interpretation of this verse became the source of a prolonged and heated debate. On the one hand, the earlier rendering clearly voiced disapproval of non-Muslim leadership and hence prohibited voting for Ahok, while the later rendering is silent on the issue and hence was regarded as irrelevant for the election. On the other hand, Ahok's allegedly blasphemous speech favored one particular interpretation, one that leaned upon the later rendering.

At this point, it is pretty apparent that the verse had a polarizing effect on Indonesian society. Ahok's allegedly blasphemous speech triggered an even more massive controversy, to the extent that towards the end of 2016, people mobilized for the three biggest rallies in Indonesian history: the Aksi Bela Islam (Defending Islam Action). Meanwhile, members of the religious and political elites also publicly expressed their opinion on the issue. Progressive or liberal scholars such as Syafi'i Ma'arif (the late leader of the Muhammadiyah), Nadirsyah Hosen, Ahmad

Sahal, Sahiron Syamsuddin and Ahmad Ishomuddin, among others, preferred the rendering *teman setia*, thereby implying their acceptance of non-Muslim leadership and protecting Ahok from the accusation of blasphemy. On the other hand, conservative-leaning figures such as Rizieq Shihab (the head of FPI), Ma'ruf Amin (a leader of the MUI, ironically then Jokowi's Vice President), Abdullah Gymnastiar (a popular preacher) and Gusrizal Gazahar (a leader of the West Sumatera branch of the MUI), among others, preferred the rendering *pemimpin-pemimpin*, implying their rejection of non-Muslim leadership and their support of the blasphemy accusation against Ahok.

While the religious elites might have the necessary intellectual tools to engage in this dispute in an informed way, the general public face a significantly different situation. Their lack of knowledge of the Arabic language and Islam's intellectual heritage left them wondering what the right rendering for the word in question was. Nonetheless, the massive mobilization, constant media coverage and disputes in social media involved ever more people in the dispute. The general public were forced to rely on the (often politically motivated) narratives provided by the elites and the available translations of the Qurʾan. Eventually, Ahok and his supporters lost the battle: Ahok was charged with blasphemy, jailed for two years and lost the election. The interpretation of *awliyāʾ* that prevailed was, therefore, one that incorporated the idea of "leadership", *pemimpin-pemimpin*. As far as the translation of the Qurʾan is concerned, conservatism prevailed in this case at least partly because, due to vernacularism, readers of the Qurʾan in translation are likely to prefer views that are coherent with the wording they find in the text. More significantly, when a new translation is introduced, such as *teman setia* at the expense of *pemimpin-pemimpin*, most people not only considered it unreasonable but also rejected the entire Qurʾan translation that contained it as fraudulent. This is a prime example of how vernacularism equates the rendering of the Qurʾan with the text itself, so much so that a change in the translation is seen as an attempt to distort the Qurʾan.[46]

In addition to figuring in high-profile political debates, disputes about the Qurʾan have been known to crop up over various random topics, such as the decision of a particular celebrity to take off her veil. All of a sudden, her social media accounts are flooded with insults based on the conservative view on the issue, and people start to bombard her account with quotations from Qurʾan translations. The mood then becomes even more heated once a religious authority becomes involved in the subject and provides an opinion on it. The range of occasions that might spark such incidents is vast. They include the stance taken by a particular political party on matters such as polygamy or shariatization of the state, routine disputes on the (im) permissibility of congratulating non-Muslims on their religious holidays, the question of whether a natural disaster is a reminder or punishment sent by God or rather a result of people's exploitation of nature, a discussion on whether vaccination is allowed, reflections on a terrorist attack that happened abroad. . . . The list goes on. Examining the disputes that involve Qurʾan translation and the participants in those disputes, it is clear that these debates are partly shaped by vernacularism. Translations of the Qurʾan are consistently quoted in order to support religious arguments, and most participants in the debates seem to believe that the translation they have

quoted fully represents the meaning of the Qurʾan. They argue against progressive and liberal thoughts because they rely on the sacralized translation that is at their disposal rather than on the views delivered by progressive or liberal thinkers. Vernacularism, therefore, partly contributes to the conservative turn in Indonesia.

Notes

1 This chapter is an elaboration of part of my PhD thesis, written in the Department of Islamic Studies at the University of Freiburg, which was published in open access as the first title of The Global Qur'an Series under the title *The Official Indonesian Qurʾān Translation: The History and Politics of Al-Qur'an dan Terjemahnya* (Cambridge: Open Book Publishers, 2022, https://doi.org/10.11647/OBP.0289). I thank Professor Johanna Pink for her invaluable feedback and discussions across the whole duration of the research project on which this chapter is based. I should also give credit to Dr. Ahmad Rafiq, who introduced me to the concept of vernacularism.

2 Fadhli Lukman, "Digital Hermeneutics and a New Face of the Qur'an Commentary: The Qur'an in Indonesian's Facebook", *Al-Jāmiʻah: Journal of Islamic Studies* 56, no. 1 (2018), 95–120.

3 Peter G. Riddell, "Translating the Qurʾān into Indonesian Languages", *Al-Bayān: Journal of Qurʾān and Ḥadīth Studies* 12, no. i (2014), 4–12; Peter G. Riddell, *Malay Court Religion, Culture and Language: Interpreting the Qur'ān in 17th Century Aceh*, Texts and Studies on the Qur'ān 12 (Leiden: Brill, 2017), 11–16.

4 Federspiel notes that Yunus had published the first three sections of his translation in 1922.

5 Howard M. Federspiel, *Popular Indonesian Literature of the Qur'an* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell Modern Indonesia Project, 1994), 10–25; Peter G. Riddell, "Menerjemahkan Al-Qur'an Ke Dalam Bahasa-Bahasa Di Indonesia", in *Sadur Sejarah Terjemahan Di Indonesia Dan Malaysia*, ed. Henri Chambert-Loir (Jakarta: Kepustakaan Populer Gramedia, 2009); Peter G. Riddell, "Translating the Qur'ān into Indonesian Languages".

6 Moch. Nur Ichwan, "Negara, Kitab Suci dan Politik: Terjemahan Resmi Al-Qur'an Di Indonesia", in *Sadur Sejarah Terjemahan di Indonesia dan Malaysia*, ed. Henri Chambert-Loir (Jakarta: Kepustakaan Populer Gramedia, 2009), 417–433.

7 Departemen Penerangan, *Ringkasan Ketetapan Madjelis Permusjawaratan Rakjat Sementara – Republik Indonesia* (Jakarta: M.P.R.S. dan Departemen Penerangan, 1961), 224.

8 For example, a number of witnesses in the blasphemy case against Basuki Tjahaja Purnama in 2017 explicitly indicated that their motivation behind citing an edition of *Al-Qur'an dan Terjemahnya* was that it is the official translation of the state. The recurring references to the translation in court led to its inclusion in the verdict document.

9 Muchlis Muhammad Hanafi, "Pengantar Pimpinan LPMQ" (Konsultasi Publik dalam Rangka Penyempurnaan Al-Qur'an dan Terjemahannya Kementerian Agama, Sarang, February 14, 2018). Unfortunately, he does not identify the year this number refers to.

10 Bruce B. Lawrence, *The Koran in English: A Biography*, Lives of Great Religious Books (Princeton and Oxford: Princeton University Press, 2017), 123.

11 KumparanNews, "Melihat Data Jemaah Haji Indonesia dari Tahun ke Tahun", *KumparanNews*, 2022, https://kumparan.com/kumparannews/melihat-data-jemaah-haji-indonesia-dari-tahun-ke-tahun-1xuHJsS87eU, accessed 5 June 2023.

12 See the chapters by Jajang A Rohmana and Masyithah Mardhatillah in this volume.

13 Travis Zadeh, *The Vernacular Qur'an: Translation and the Rise of Persian Exegesis* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2012), 15–16; Johanna Pink, "Translation", in *The Routledge Companion to the Qur'an*, eds. George Archer, Maria M. Dakake, and Daniel A. Madigan, 1st ed. (New York: Routledge, 2021), 364.

14 Stefan Wild, "Muslim Translators and Translations of the Qur'an into English", *Journal of Qur'anic Studies* 17, no. 3 (2015), 168.
15 Pink, "Translation", 368.
16 See, for example, the exposition of al-Zurqānī in his *Manāhil al-ʿIrfān* about Qur'an translation. Muḥammad ʿAbd al-ʿAẓīm al-Zurqāni, *Manāhil al-ʿIrfān fī ʿUlūm al-Qurʾān*, vol. 2 (Beirut: Dār al-Kutub al-ʿArabī, 1995), 78–80.
17 Waleed Bleyhesh al-Amri, "Qurʾān Translation and Commentary: An Uncharted Relationship?", *Islam & Science* 8, no. 2 (2010), 81–110.
18 Pink, "Translation", 364.
19 Raden Adjeng Kartini, *Letters of a Javanese Princess*, trans. Agnes Louise Symmers (New York: The Norton Library, 1964), 44.
20 Nico J.G. Kaptein, *Islam, Colonialism and the Modern Age in the Netherlands East Indies: A Biography of Sayyid ʿUthmān (1822–1914)* (Leiden: Brill, 2014), 197–201; Ichwan, "Negara, Kitab Suci dan Politik", 417.
21 Mahmud Yunus, *Tafsir Quran Karim Bahasa Indonesia*, 7th ed. (Jakarta: Mahmud Yunus Wa Dzurriyyah, 2011); Federspiel, *Popular Indonesian Literature of the Qur'an*, 12.
22 Riddell, "Translating the Qurʾān into Indonesian Languages", 13.
23 This is reflected in the practice of the King Fahd Complex for the Printing of the Holy Qurʾan of calling their translations *tarjamat maʿānī al-Qurʾān* ("translation of the meanings of the Qurʾan"), as is the case with the Arabic title of the version of *Al-Qur'an dan Terjemahnya* of the Ministry of Religious Affairs that the King Fahd Complex prints in Medina.
24 Ahmad Najib Burhani, *When Muslims Are Not Muslims: The Ahmadiyya Community and the Discourse on Heresy in Indonesia* (PhD thesis, Santa Barbara: University of California, 2013), 83–97.
25 Moch. Nur Ichwan, "Differing Responses to an Ahmadi Translation and Exegesis: 'The Holy Qur'ân' in Egypt and Indonesia", *Archipel* 62, no. 1 (2001).
26 M. Brett Wilson, *Translating the Qur'an in an Age of Nationalism: Print Culture and Modern Islam in Turkey* (London: Oxford University Press, 2014), 4.
27 Keith E. Small, *Qur'āns: Books of Divine Encounter* (Oxford: Bodleian Library, 2015), 15, 22.
28 Johanna Pink, "Form Follows Function: Notes on the Arrangement of Texts in Printed Qur'an Translations", *Journal of Qur'anic Studies* 19, no. 1 (2017), 143.
29 *Pojok* or *sudut* literally means "corner". A *muṣḥaf pojok* always ends the page with the end of a verse, which enables memorizers of the Qurʾān to measure their progress precisely.
30 In 1984, the Ministry of Religious Affairs issued a standardized *muṣḥaf*. From then on, all publishers of the *muṣḥaf* in Indonesia had to use this standardized version.
31 Ali Akbar, "Percetakan Mushaf Al-Qur'an di Indonesia", *Suhuf* 4, no. 2 (2011), 271–275.
32 Muhammad Abd al-Azīm al-Zarqāni, *Manāhil al-ʿirfān fī ʿulūm al-Qurʾān*, vol. 2 (Beirut: Dār al-Kutub al-ʿArabiy, 1995), 79–82.
33 Pink, "Form Follows Function", 145.
34 Johanna Pink, *Muslim Qur'anic Interpretation Today: Media, Genealogies, and Interpretive Communities* (Sheffield: Equinox, 2019), 14.
35 Wild even argues that English, instead of Arabic, is the lingua franca of the Islamic world. Wild, "Muslim Translators and Translations of the Qur'an into English".
36 This assumption is built upon Saleh's theory that *tafsīr* is a genealogical tradition. See Walid A. Saleh, *The Formation of the Classical tafsīr Tradition: The Qurʾān Commentary of al-Thaʿlabī* (d. 427/1035) (Leiden: Brill, 2004), 14.
37 Abdullah Saeed, *Interpreting the Qur'ān: Towards a Contemporary Approach* (London: Routledge, 2006), 3.
38 Saeed, *Interpreting the Qur'ān*, 3.
39 Pink, *Muslim Qur'anic Interpretation Today*, 48–49.

40 Martin van Bruinessen, "Introduction: Contemporary Developments in Indonesian Islam and the 'Conservative Turn' of the Early Twenty First Century", in *Contemporary Development in Indonesian Islam: Explaining the "Conservative Turn"*, ed. Martin van Bruinessen (Singapore: ISEAS Publishing, 2013), 16.
41 van Bruinessen, "Introduction", 5.
42 Lukman, "Digital Hermeneutics and a New Face of The Qur'an Commentary".
43 One interpretation of the speech suggests that Ahok accused the Qurʾan of being an untruthful scripture, a theologically sensitive issue for Muslims. His supporters, however, understand his speech to be a denouncement of his political competitor who abused Q 5:51 in pursuit of his own political interests.
44 The translation is by Abdel Haleem. The term *awliyāʾ* is left untranslated to allow for an unbiased interpretation of the word on which the disputes over the verse are centered.
45 Examples for this are *al-Azhar* by Hamka, the translation by Mahmud Yunus and the early editions of *Al-Qur'an dan Terjemahnya*. In 1954, a periodical magazine affiliated with a Puritan Muslim organization, Persis, also understood the verse as a prohibition against appointing non-Muslims as leaders among Muslim communities.
46 Lukman, *The Official Indonesian Qurʾān Translation*, 294–296.

Part II

A multilingual state

Beyond the Indonesian language

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5 Fathers and sons, angels and women

Translation, exegesis and social hierarchy in Javanese *tafsīr*

Johanna Pink

> Mention in the Qurʾan the story of Mary. She withdrew from her family to a place to the east and secluded herself away. We sent Our Spirit to appear before her in the form of a perfected man. She said, "I seek the Lord of Mercy's protection against you: if you have any fear of Him [do not approach]!" but he said, "I am but a Messenger from your Lord, [come] to announce to you the gift of a pure boy." She said, "How can I have a boy when no man has touched me? I have not been unchaste," and he said, "This is what your Lord said: 'It is easy for Me – We shall make him a sign to all people, a blessing from Us.'"
>
> (Q 19:16–21)[1]

This Qurʾanic story portrays an unusual encounter that is not part of most humans' day-to-day experience: a woman talks to an angel. Precisely because this is so unusual, she does not recognize her interlocutor as an angel but instead considers him a human stranger, possibly coming to her with sexual intentions, and protests when he approaches her. Thereupon he discloses his identity which she seems to accept, judging from the fact that she carries on with the discussion.

On a linguistic level, the Qurʾanic dialogue between the two reveals little of how unusual this encounter is or of how the relationship between them shifts after the angel has revealed his identity. There is no suggestion of any difference in status between the speakers in the language of either the Arabic Qurʾan or its English translation, nor is there any shift in the linguistic register used by Mary after she has recognized the stranger as an angel. The Qurʾan uses the same Arabic word for "he said" and "she said" throughout the dialogue (*qāla/qālat*), and both Mary and the angel use the same term, *ghulām*, when talking of "a boy". Therefore, English translators typically see no need to introduce status distinctions into the dialogue, even when they stray from a word-for-word translation by filling the ellipses in the Qurʾanic text. After all, the Arabic original does not contain status markers, nor do readers of English need them in order to make sense of the situation.

This is not the case in Javanese. The Javanese language – the largest regional language in Indonesia, in terms of the number of speakers – is highly status conscious, to the point of not allowing a status-neutral mode of expression. It has two basic separate registers, or language levels, that have partly different vocabulary

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and grammatical suffixes: *krama* is used when addressing persons who are of higher status or older family members or to politely address strangers and other persons of equal rank; *ngoko* is used for addressing persons of lower status, younger family members or persons of equal status who are close to oneself. These registers are highly formalized; the grammatical forms and vocabulary of *krama* cannot be mixed with *ngoko*.[2] In addition, Javanese has vocabulary-sets that do not constitute registers of their own but consist of honorifics (*krama inggil*) and humilifics (*krama andhap*). For example, when talking about the child of a high-ranking person, the correct term would not be *anak* but *putra*, no matter if one uses *krama* or *ngoko*. Both terms mean "offspring", but they are not interchangeable.[3]

In recent decades, the relevance of Javanese status distinctions has eroded significantly, especially in spoken language. In writing, Javanese has been largely superseded by Indonesian.[4] Nevertheless, there are some niches in which Javanese literature still plays a role, and Islamic literature, especially that used in Javanese Islamic boarding schools (*pesantren*), is one of them. Older Javanese texts, dating from the first two thirds of the twentieth century, are still taught there, and new texts are also produced for this market. The material I use in this chapter dates from the 1970s and earlier. At that time, the registers, honorifics and humilifics were still part of standard Javanese usage, both orally and in writing. Thus, when the Javanese exegete Bisri Musthofa (1914–1977) has Mary say "How can I have a son when I have not been touched by a man", he chooses to have her express herself in polite and reverent *krama*:

> *Kados pundi sagedipun kawula gadhah anak jaler, tiyang kawula punika mboten kagepok dening tiyang jaler?*[5]

Had he opted for *ngoko*, the resulting sentence would have been:

> *Piye isane aku nduwe anak lanang, wong aku iki ora kagepok dening wong lanang?*

This one example illustrates the profound difference between the two registers: there is no neutral ground, either choice describes a particular social relationship between speaker and addressee. Translators and exegetes have to make up their minds, which in the case of this unusual encounter seems to be less than straightforward. Three Javanese *tafsīr* works choose to have both speakers use *krama* throughout, making this a polite and distanced encounter.[6] This is not the only option to interpret the situation in Javanese, however, because a fourth work chooses to have both of them use *ngoko* throughout, interspersed with honorifics and humilifics.[7] For example, the child in question, who is referred to as *anak* in the other works, is consistently called *putra* here, a wording through which either the child – Jesus – or his mother are shown particular reverence.

Two further exegetes, among them the previously mentioned Bisri Musthofa, do not limit themselves to one register. Instead, they exploit the full potential of Javanese, turning the choice of register into an elegant exegetical device.[8] In their works, Mary addresses the angel in *ngoko* when she first notices him, and the angel

responds to her in the same register, explaining that he is a messenger from God. Upon hearing this, Mary immediately switches to *krama*, thereby signaling that the social relationship has shifted significantly: rather than considering him an illicit intruder, she now sees him as a divine representative. The exegetes do not need to provide any explanation in order to demonstrate Mary's acceptance of the angel's claim to the audience; it is the only conceivable reason for the change of register to *krama*, and the choice of register is an exegetical move in itself. It also makes Mary's previous choice of *ngoko* appear to be deliberate rudeness towards a stranger whom she wanted to get rid of. In both works, the angel continues addressing Mary in *ngoko* after her switch to the polite register, signifying a clear difference in status between the two.

When Javanese exegetes disagree with regard to the choice of register in their translation of a Qurʾanic dialogue, one possible explanation might be simply a variation in individual preference for either the lower or the higher register. Such preferences might depend on the translators' regional origin, their audience or the literary level of their works or reflect the linguistic norms of the time at which their work was written. However, individual preference clearly does not explain everything because there are many speech acts in the Qurʾan where the Javanese exegetes' choice of register is unanimous. The conversation between Mary and the angel does not belong in that category and thus obviously entails some ambiguity. Such ambiguity often indicates that the Qurʾan itself is ambiguous, describing social situations that are either unfamiliar or insufficiently explained, with the result that different exegetes come to different conclusions with regard to the level of politeness that is required. The comparison between the Javanese exegetes' translations thus gives insight into their world view but also reveals fundamental social ambiguities in the Qurʾan that we might not be aware of if it were not for the medium of the Javanese language.

Before delving further into the Javanese exegetes' approaches to Qurʾanic dialogue and the ambiguities they reveal, I will introduce the individual exegetical works that this chapter is based on and discuss the nature of the Qurʾan translation they contain.

Five Javanese renderings of the Qurʾan: *tafsīr*, translation and *kitab kuning*

This chapter is based on five Javanese works of Qurʾanic exegesis that have been published between the first decade of the twentieth century and the 1970s, sometimes in different editions and scripts.[9]

Two of these texts are closely related, probably because they are both based on a Javanese *tafsīr* by Kanjeng Raden Penghulu Tafsir Anom V (d. 1933), a scholar from the *kraton* (palace) of Solo (Surakarta), that was collected and edited by his sons. It was written in *pegon* which is a fully vowelized Arabic script used specifically for Javanese.[10]

The first printed edition or version of this text is by Bagus Ngarpah (d. 1913), the head teacher of the Manbaʿ al-ʿulūm school in Solo, which was founded in

1905 on behalf of the ruler of Solo for children from the *kraton* milieu as a modernized alternative to traditional boarding schools. His *Kuran Jawi* was designed to be used as a textbook alongside a Javanese translation of the *Tafsīr al-Jalālayn*, an extremely concise Arabic work of *tafsīr* of the late Mamluk period (*c*. 1500) that played a central role in Islamic learning for centuries across the Islamicate world. *Kuran Jawi* originally circulated in manuscript form, in Javanese (*carakan*) script, from around 1905, and appeared in print, in Latin script, around 1908/09, under the sponsorship of a literary circle that had received a subsidy from the monarch of Solo. The publication of this work caused a public controversy in response to which Bagus Ngarpah declared that, contrary to the impression evoked by the title *Javanese Qurʾan*, this was a *tafsīr* rather than a replacement for the Arabic Qurʾan. Indeed, the printed edition contains the Arabic text, whereas the Javanese *tafsīr* is an expanded rendering of the Arabic Qurʾan that provides a small amount of additional detail and some explanations of difficult terms. As a matter of fact, Bagus Ngarpah's main contribution might have been the conversion of Kanjeng Raden Penghulu Tafsir Anom's work into Javanese script and later into Latin script.[11] Possibly, this was related to an emphasis on Javanese and/or Latin reading and writing skills in the curriculum of his school.

The other version of this text, entitled *Tafsir al-Qur'an Suci (Basa Jawi)*, which is similar to Bagus Ngarpah's rendering but by no means identical, comes from Mohammad Adnan (1889–1969), one of the sons of Kanjeng Raden Penghulu Tafsir Anom V. Adnan was an eminent Islamic scholar of the late colonial and early Republican period. Born and raised in the *kraton* milieu of Solo, he received a hybrid education that included teaching from his father, as well as more formal education at a colonial school, in different *pesantren*, and, from the age of 17, in Mecca, where he stayed for eight years. He assumed various teaching positions and during the 1950s and 1960s played an important role as a professor in the newly established national system of higher religious education, especially in what was first PTAIN (Pendidikan Tinggi Agama Islam Negeri) and from 1960 onwards IAIN (Institut Agama Islam Negeri) in Yogyakarta. His first edition of his father's work was published in 1923 or 1924 in *pegon*. In 1953, he began reworking the translation but never finalized or published these efforts. His son Abdul Basith Adnan, with the help of some collaborators, collected his father's drafts and modernized and edited them and, in 1981, posthumously published his father's Qurʾan translation in Latin script without mentioning the fact that it was based on an earlier work.[12] *Tafsir al-Qur'an Suci* contains the Arabic Qurʾan, with each verse followed by a slightly expanded Javanese rendering. For most verses, the wording is identical or extremely similar to that of Bagus Ngarpah. Even Adnan's footnotes are nearly identical to Bagus Ngarpah's explanations of words and technical terms. However, the fact that they are footnotes, rather than integrated with the text, makes Adnan's work come across more as a translation than Bagus Ngarpah's, despite a comparable amount of commentary.

The general similarity of these two works notwithstanding, there are frequently verses where Adnan's translation has nothing in common with that of Bagus Ngarpah, to the point where they choose different registers to render direct

speech in Qurʾanic narratives. In those cases, one of these two scholars – probably Adnan – obviously decided to consciously deviate from his source and write his own translation. Adnan's edition uses a modernized vocabulary but it is hard to say whether this was his or his editors' choice.

The third work I examine, *Qur'an Suci Jarwa Jawi*, translated by Minhadjurrahman Djajasugita (or Djojosoegito) and M. Mufti Sharif, is an Ahmadiyya translation. It comes from the Lahore branch of the Ahmadiyya movement and is based on Muhammad Ali's English translation of the Qurʾan that was published in 1917.[13] Djajasugita (1889–1968) was of the same generation as Mohammad Adnan. Having received a *pesantren* education, he, like many of his generation, became impressed with Egyptian-style modernism and was active in the modernist Muhammadiyah movement. Then he came across the writings of the Lahore Ahmadiyya, which were widely distributed at the time, whereupon he founded an Indonesian branch in 1930 and subsequently started translating Muhammad Ali's Qurʾan translation and *tafsīr* into Javanese. M. Mufti Sharif likewise emerged from the Muhammadiyah milieu which, at first, had a cordial relationship with the Lahore Ahmadiyya when that movement came to Indonesia in the early 1920s. Generally, at the time, Ahmadiyya literature was especially popular among literate Indonesians who had not received a traditional Islamic education because it was accessible to lay readers and did not require knowledge of Arabic. This was particularly true for the Ahmadiyya Qurʾan translations that were the first of their kind in Indonesia: the 1934 Dutch translation by Soedewo was a great success.[14]

The Muhammadiyah shed their benevolent attitude towards the Lahore Ahmadiyya around the years 1928 and 1929 when H.O.S. Tjokroaminoto's project of translating Muhammad Ali's Qurʾan translation into Indonesian elicited a violent controversy among Indonesian intellectuals and ulama. Modernists connected to the Muhammadiyah movement were particularly opposed to this project. Egyptian modernism was extremely influential in their circles, and Rashīd Riḍā's (1860–1935) vehement attacks against the genre of Qurʾan translation that Muhammad Ali had produced, as well as against the Ahmadiyya movement, had a profound impact; in fact, some of his statements were written in response to Indonesian requests for fatwas. Unlike Tjokroaminoto's aborted attempt at producing a translation of Muhammad Ali's Qurʾan translation into Indonesian, the Javanese translation of the same work, which was started in the 1930s and was completed in the 1950s, did not attract as much attention, even though at the time of publication, between 1958 and 1966, Javanese was still a far more important medium of public communication in Indonesia than it is today.[15]

Qur'an Suci Jarwa Jawi contains the Arabic Qurʾan, its translation into Javanese and a Javanese translation of Muhammad Ali's extensive footnotes. Despite the vast amount of commentary that these footnotes provide, the work does not come across as a *tafsīr* in the classic sense. The notes are clearly separated from the translation and subordinate to it, and not every verse of the Qurʾan is annotated; commentary is only provided on those terms or statements that Muhammad Ali thought needed an explanation.

At first glance, this Javanese rendering of the Qurʾan is no more than a translation of a translation. It normally follows Muhammad Ali where he made additions in brackets or italicized terms, it copies many of his word choices and it translates all his notes and the comments he made in the margins. However, the Javanese translation of the Qurʾanic text is clearly based on the Arabic Qurʾan as well as on Muhammad Ali's English translation. This is evident from the fact that in some cases, the translators adhere more closely to the Qurʾanic terminology than to Muhammad Ali's choices and tend to opt for Arabic loanwords that echo Qurʾanic expressions.[16] One conspicuous deviation from the original will be discussed in the following.[17]

While Bagus Ngarpah's and Adnan's works could be called a second-degree translation of a *tafsīr*, and *Qur'an Suci Jarwa Jawi* a second-degree translation of a translation with notes, the three works presumably address the same audience: literate Javanese who have not received a traditional Islamic education and are unable to engage directly with the Arabic Qurʾan. Their books are clearly geared towards readers whose focus is not on recitation but on gaining access to the Qurʾan's meaning. In these works, it is entirely possible to read the Javanese translation only and to disregard the Arabic Qurʾan.

This is different with the other two works I examine here, both of which belong to the genre of *kitab kuning*, "yellow books". That genre consists of inexpensive books produced for the use in *pesantren* and similar types of Islamic schools across the archipelago and is named after the yellowish paper of early Middle Eastern prints. A little more than half of these texts are in Arabic; the rest are in Malay, Javanese or other regional languages, but are typically printed in Arabic script – in the case of Javanese, this means the fully vowelized *pegon* variant. The curriculum has a heavy focus on Islamic law, religious doctrine and the teaching of classical Arabic. The inclusion of material drawn from Qurʾanic studies, *tafsīr* and hadith in these works is largely a twentieth-century phenomenon, caused by the modernists' increased emphasis on the direct study of the textual sources of Islam, which had an impact far beyond their immediate Muhammadiyah circles. However, despite such modernist influences, the *kitab kuning* genre is, on the whole, perceived as traditional, as expressed by its designation by the Arabic loanword *kitab*. In the Indonesian language, it is semantically distinguished from the Latin-script books (*buku*, rather than *kitab*) that are written by Islamists or modernist religious intellectuals. Some contemporary publishers of *kitab kuning* actually dye the edges of the books yellow in order to emphasize the continuity with the scholarly and educational traditions of the *pesantren* environment.[18]

The first of the Javanese *kitab kuning* works I examine here is Bisri Musthofa's (Bishrī Muṣṭafā, 1915–1977) *Al-Ibrīz li-maʿrifat al-Qurʾān al-ʿazīz* (or *al-Ibrīz*) which was first published in Rembang in 1959, in *pegon* script. The more recent, undated *pegon* edition I have worked with has three volumes. In 2011, a one-volume glossy Latin-script version with gilded writing on the cover and color print was published in addition to the *pegon* version. That edition is certainly not meant to be a textbook for *pesantren* students. Rather, its luxurious presentation is indicative of the prestige of this work, which is probably the most widely known

Javanese Qurʾan translation, and the prestige of its author – or possibly the author's son, A. Mustofa Bisri "Gus Mus" (b. 1944), a famous Indonesian scholar who continues to teach *al-Ibrīz* at the *pesantren* in Rembang in central Jawa which his father had headed since the 1930s. Videos of these sessions, which are mainly attended by adults, can be watched on YouTube.[19] Both Bisri Musthofa and "Gus Mus" were, and still are, associated with the traditionalist Islamic organization Nahdlatul Ulama.

The author of the other *kitab kuning* work of *tafsīr* studied here, Misbah Mustafa (Miṣbāḥ b. Zayn al-Muṣṭafā, 1916–1994), was, in fact, the younger brother of Bisri Musthofa. Both brothers were married to daughters or granddaughters of *pesantren* leaders whose schools they eventually took over, Bisri in Rembang and Misbah in Bangilan in East Java. Misbah wrote his *al-Iklīl fī maʿānī al-tanzīl* (or *al-Iklīl*) between 1977 and 1985, and it was subsequently published in Surabaya in an undated soft cover edition in thirty parts, conforming to the thirty *ajzāʾ* of the Qurʾan.[20]

Both works are similarly structured, although slightly different in layout, because they follow the *pesantren* style of teaching the Qurʾan. *Al-Ibrīz* displays the Qurʾanic text in Arabic, alongside an interlinear word-for-word translation, in a box in the upper part of the inner half of each book page, accompanied by the translation in the exegete's own words, verse by verse, at the outer margin and bottom of the page, flowing around the Qurʾanic text. In between the translated verses, the author sometimes provides additional information, clearly marked with headers such as *qiṣṣa* ("story"), *fāʾida* ("benefit; meaning") or *tanbīh* ("remark"). In the narrative segments of the Qurʾan in particular such additional paragraphs occur fairly frequently, every three or five verses; in other parts of the Qurʾan, they are rare. Generally, these interpolations are short, and even when there is a lot of background story to tell they are seldom longer than five to ten lines.

In *al-Iklīl*, the division into three separate modes of interpretation – interlinear word-by-word translation, the exegete's rephrasing of the verses' content and additional information – is even clearer, and is indicated by a tripartite structure, according to which each page is divided into three sections by horizontal dividing lines. At the top is the Arabic Qurʾan with the interlinear translation; in the middle is a re-narration of the meaning of the Qurʾan, one paragraph per verse; and at the bottom additional information is provided on some – but not all – verses, marked as "kt" (*keterangan*) in Arabic letters. This may range from a few lines to several pages and contains hadiths, background stories, information about personages mentioned in the Qurʾan (such as their name and age) and occasionally longer excurses into dogmatic aspects. For example, for Q 12:5, a verse that refers to Joseph's account of his dream to his father, Jacob, there is an excursus of no less than eight pages on the nature of dreams, the distinction between divine and Satanic dreams and the characteristics of people who receive divine dreams.

In both works, the interlinear translation follows a system that is employed in Javanese *pesantren*, called *gandul*.[21] It does not constitute a coherent text but rather provides students with the meaning as well as the grammatical and syntactical function of each Arabic word in the Qurʾan. Indicators point out whether it is the subject or object, a participle, a plural form, a verb in the past tense, where a

subordinate clause starts and ends and so forth. If the subject or object is missing or takes the form of a pronoun, it is spelled out; for example, if the Qurʾan says "Then they took him away with them", the interlinear translation would inform students that it is the brothers of Joseph who took Joseph away with them.

The other type of translation that these *kitab kuning* works of *tafsīr* contain, besides the interlinear one, is a coherent rendering of the meaning of each verse, and it is this type that the subsequent analysis will focus on.

Tafsīr or translation? The genre question revisited

> *Al-ibrīz li maʿrifat tafsīr al-Qurʾān al-ʿazīz* . . . is more of a translation than an exegesis proper. Since translations of the Qur'an necessarily involve a certain amount of interpretation, they are usually called *tafsīr*, too. A greater amount of commentary is given in another Javanese *tafsīr*, *Al-iklīl fi maʿānī 'l-tanzīl*, by Miṣbaḥ [sic] b. Zayn al-Muṣṭafā.[22]

In line with van Bruinessen's previous remark, none of the five works examined here calls itself a translation; they all claim to be commentaries on the Qurʾan or to otherwise offer access to the Arabic Qurʾan's meaning. To what extent can they still be treated as translations, as I do in this chapter?

It is clear that the core motivation for all five scholars is their desire to render the Qurʾan into Javanese and commentary is only added when they consider it indispensable. Adnan provides only a small number of very short footnotes in addition to his translation of the Qurʾanic verses. Bagus Ngarpha integrates those comments into the text but they do not take up the bulk of the work, and, like Adnan, he does not comment on every verse. *Al-Ibrīz* has a higher number of excurses and additions, especially where stories are concerned, but they are far outweighed by the Javanese rendering of the meaning of the Qurʾanic verses – a rendering that is, however, considerably more extensive than the Qurʾanic text and also consistently longer than that of the other three Javanese works. *Al-Iklīl* and the Muhammad Ali translation contain a larger amount of commentary, but even there, unlike in classical Qurʾanic commentaries, many verses are left uncommented upon, and the commentary that is included is clearly separated from and subordinated to the translation of the verses.

The translations themselves need a closer look, however. Of course, it is inevitable for any translation to "involve a certain amount of interpretation", as van Bruinessen remarked, but there is a big difference between a translator who aims to provide a "literal" representation of a source text and one who confidently presents his own approach to a text, in however concise a manner. That difference is not only one of attitude: it also, clearly, has a big impact on the resulting text. If the Javanese exegetes label their works *tafsīr*, rather than "translation", this might in itself be an admission of their unwillingness to suppress their own voice, and this has clear implications for the nature of their translations.

Table 5.1 shows the five Javanese exegetes' translations of one verse, Q 19:18, to the exclusion of interlinear translations, footnotes or additional information that is otherwise separated from the translation in page layout.

Table 5.1 Javanese translations of Q 19:18

Arabic	قَالَتْ إِنِّي أَعُوذُ بِالرَّحْمَٰنِ مِنكَ إِن كُنتَ تَقِيًّا
Transliteration	*Qālat innī aʿūdhu biʾl-Raḥmāni minka in kunta taqiyyan*
English	She said, "I seek the Merciful One's protection against you. If you are God-fearing!"
Bagus Ngarpah	*Maryam banjur matur marang Malaikat Jabarail: Menawi sampeyan punika tiyang ajrih ing Allah, kula ngungsi nyuwun pitulungipun Pangeran Ingkang Mahamirah, sampun ngantos kenging panggodha jalaran sampeyan*. Mary then humbly said to the Angel Gabriel, "If you are a person who fears God, I flee to ask for the Most Kind Lord's help, I should not be harassed because of you." (*krama*)
Adnan	*Maryam banjur matur marang Malaikat Jibril: "Sayektosipun kula nyuwun reksa dhateng Ingkang Maha Welas saking panjenengan, menawi panjenengan bekti dhateng Panjenenganipun Allah, sampun ngantos kenging panggodha jalaran panjenengan."* Mary then humbly said to the Angel Gabriel, "Verily, I ask the Most Merciful for protection from you, if you are obedient to Allah's Might, I should not be harassed because of you." (*krama*)
Ahmadiyya	*Calathune: Saestu kula angungsi dhateng Ingkang-Maha-murah saking sampeyan, manawi sampeyan punika tiyang ingkang anjagi (dhiri saking awon)*. She said, verily, I flee to the Most Benevolent from you, if you are one who guards (himself against evil). (*krama*)
Bisri Musthofa	*Siti Maryam ngendhika, temenan Ingsun nyuwun pangereksa kelawan Allah Ta'ala kang Maha Welas saking sira. Yen sira iku pancen wong kang wedi Allah Ta'ala. Mbok iya enggal lungaa saking kene!!! Aja ngaru biru ingsun*. The Virgin Mary spoke, verily, I ask Allah Taʿālā, the Most Merciful, for protection from you. If you truly fear Allah Taʿālā. Please, please go away from here quickly!!! Do not harass me. (*ngoko*)
Misbah Mustafa	*Maryam dhawuh: Ingsun nyuwun pangreksane Pengeran ingsun kang Welas marang kawulane saking fitnah sampeyan yen sampeyan wedi Allah supaya ngadoh saking ingsun*. Mary spoke, I ask my Merciful Lord to protect me from temptation (*fitnah*) by you; if you fear Allah, you will go away from me. (*ngoko*)

The only one of these five works that clearly strives to conform to modern European models of scriptural translation in its translation of this verse is the Ahmadiyya one. It follows Muhammad Ali's literalist approach in that it limits the translation to the close representation of the Qurʾanic wording and clearly indicates additions by setting them in brackets. Muhammad Ali's English translation is very concerned with recovering the semantics of the original, going beyond common translations of terms such as *taqwā*; for example, the adjective *taqiyyun* is translated as "one guarding", rather than the more usual "God-fearing". His Javanese translators imitate that feature of the original. They make a small addition, however; Muhammad Ali's ambiguous "one guarding (against evil)" becomes "one who guards (*himself*

against evil)". Just like Muhammad Ali, they opt to render *aʿūdhu* with "I flee" (*angungsi*) rather than with "I seek protection" (*nyuwun* [*pang*]*reksa*), as most of the other Javanese translators do – with the exception of Bagus Ngarpah, who achieves a compromise. The Ahmadiyya translation is the only one to aim for a word-for-word rendering of the source text, with as few concessions to the semantics and grammar of the target language, and as little overt interpretive intervention, as possible. As well as clearly marking the minimal number of additions they make by putting them in brackets, Muhammad Ali and his Javanese translators also highlight necessary deviations from the source text in the margin.

In contrast to the Ahmadiyya translation, the other Javanese exegetes do not attempt to literally translate the Qurʾanic wording as much as they try to tell their audience, in their own words, what it means. All of them add a main clause to the elliptical "if you are God-fearing" (*in kunta taqiyyan*) along the lines of "go away" or "do not harass me". Misbah Mustafa specifies Mary's plea for protection as a protection from the *fitna* or temptation that the angel constitutes to her. All four exegetes give the speaker's name, which is implied but not mentioned in the source text. Bagus Ngarpah and Adnan also mention the addressee, whose name they give as Jibrīl (Gabriel) despite the fact that the Qurʾan does not specify this. All three expand on the expression "the Merciful One".

Is it more appropriate to call their works *tafsīr*, then? To answer this question, a useful point of comparison would be the previously mentioned *Tafsīr al-Jalālayn*. It was the foundation of Qurʾanic instruction in Javanese *pesantren* until at least the nineteenth century.[23] This work comments on Q 19:18 as follows:

> She said, "I seek the Merciful One's protection against you. If you are God-fearing (leave me alone by virtue of my appeal to God for protection)."[24]

Just like the Javanese exegetes, save for the Ahmadiyya translators, the *Jalālayn* commentary fills in the ellipsis created by Mary's conditional clause "if you are God-fearing" with an appeal to the angel to leave her alone. This is more than one of the unavoidable or even unconscious interpretive decisions that all translators are forced to make; it is a conscious exegetical move. Mohammad Adnan, Bisri Musthofa and Misbah Mustafa have no qualms about making such exegetical moves by adding to the Qurʾanic wording. Bisri Musthofa, Bagus Ngarpah and Mohammad Adnan occasionally mark additions to the text, but very often, they do not. These translators obviously do not merely call their works *tafsīr* out of deference to religious sentiment or doctrine; they see themselves as exegetes rather than translators. It is their own voice that is speaking rather than God's voice that is being transferred into another language with as little alteration as possible.

That said, the similarity between the Javanese *tafsīr* works and the *Jalālayn* is limited. The former do not build the text of the Arabic Qurʾan into their gloss but simply paraphrase it in the exegete's own language and voice. In doing so, they employ their own style which is adapted to their target audience, and that audience significantly differs from the one that was probably envisaged by the authors of the *Jalālayn*. Bagus Ngarpah's and Adnan's *tafsīr* works use a literary and formal style

and were probably primarily targeted at literate Indonesians without an in-depth Islamic education and the knowledge of Arabic that usually went along with it. In contrast, Bisri Musthofa's A*l-Ibrīz* and Misbah Mustafa's *al-Iklīl* are clearly geared towards an audience of children and villagers. This is particularly visible with *al-Ibrīz*: the exegete here becomes a story-teller, creating an impression of the characters' emotions and enhancing the drama of the skeletal and elliptic Qurʾanic story. Bisri Musthofa's artful switch of register, whereby Mary switches from *ngoko* to *krama* after having accepted the angel's claim, precisely fits his attempt to reconstruct a real-life situation, helping his audience imagine flesh and blood characters who behave like real people would. Mary's appeal to the angel to go away and leave her alone comes across as fairly rude.[25] This casts the moment of surprise evoked by the angel's revelation and the subsequent shift in her attitude into sharp relief, and Bisri Musthofa turns the elliptic Qurʾanic narrative into a lively, animated scene designed to capture his audience's imagination. Misbah Mustafa, Bagus Ngarpah and Mohammad Adnan have similar aims although they use less embellishment and emotional language. They make a conspicuous effort, though, to translate Qurʾanic stories in a way that resonates with a Javanese environment. For example, in their translations, the wolf that supposedly ate Joseph becomes a tiger and Joseph's brothers take him out into the "forest" (Q 12:12–14, 17).

What the four Javanese exegetes are doing, then, might be more aptly called story-telling than exegesis, although story-telling can be a form of exegesis in itself. In contrast to classical works of *tafsīr*, they do not openly evoke the opinions of previous exegetes and the resulting differences in opinion. While they occasionally provide additional detail, they essentially present the content of the Qurʾan as one continuous, unambiguous narrative, and reduce its ambiguity by filling in the ellipses left by the Qurʾan. This is where their similarity to the *Jalālayn* has its limits. While the *Jalālayn* does not necessarily address the vast and polyvalent exegetical tradition, it does presuppose its existence and builds on it. The Javanese commentaries, on the other hand, are clearly aware of many premodern works of *tafsīr* but strive to be comprehensible without recurring to them at all, and they never engage in the type of polyvalent reading that Norman Calder considered a defining feature of classical *tafsīr*.[26]

Paradoxically, the Ahmadiyya translation, despite its quest for a literal representation of the source text, takes a very different approach. It has notes in the margin that point out alternative meanings and nuances or provide the literal meaning of the Arabic word in question in case the translator had to use a different word for the sake of comprehensibility, thereby conforming to a European idea of translation that prioritizes faithfulness to the source text and minimizes the translator's role. This concept of Qurʾan translation was novel when it first appeared in Indonesia in the 1920s but was relatively quickly adopted by some – but not all – translators into Indonesian.[27] However, the same is not true for the Javanese works examined here, with the exception of the Ahmadiyya translation, all four of which are rooted in the *pesantren* tradition. The authority of their authors does not derive from their ability to present a modernized version of Islam that conforms to European models of scriptural translation and interpretation but from their rootedness in a well-respected tradition of

Islamic learning. While their desire to provide a localized interpretation of the Qurʾan in a coherent form is, to a certain extent, a modern venture, they are closer to the traditionalist scholars of the Nadhlatul Ulama than to the spectrum of modernist intellectuals raised in Dutch schools. Their status as *kiai*, or Islamic teachers, legitimizes them to confidently present the Qurʾan's meaning in their own voice, without any pretense to providing a literal, neutral and objective rendering of the source text. In contrast to Qurʾan translations into Indonesian, the process of translating the Qurʾan was not meant to contribute to the production of a new language and, thereby, the destabilization of an existing order, a process which encouraged the adoption of new genres; instead the translation process was meant to continue, and thereby stabilize, an existing system of authority and was therefore conducted in a manner that was not disruptive to that system, as the dismissal of exegetical traditions and the narrative universe of Javanese scholarship would have been.[28]

Qurʾanic dialogue and Javanese register

Whether or not the Javanese exegetes are willing to make deliberate exegetical additions to the text in their translations, the hierarchical structure of the Javanese language forces them to make an exegetical choice as soon as they render Qurʾanic dialogue into Javanese. When persons are speaking, there is no neutral register to use that does not imply a statement on social hierarchies and status. Thus, exegetes have no choice but to assign a relative rank in the social hierarchy to speakers and make a decision on their relationship with one another, regardless of whether they actually want to, or whether they are even aware of doing so.

In order to find out more about those choices and their exegetical relevance, I have analyzed the Javanese exegetes' approach to a set of Qurʾanic stories that involve dialogue or, more precisely, direct speech. While selecting segments of dialogue for my analysis, I have focused on passages that describe real-life situations among a variety of persons of different rank, gender and/or species. I have examined the following Qurʾanic narratives:

- the story of Joseph and his interactions with his father, brothers, the Egyptian household in which he lived, Egyptian noblewomen, fellow prisoners, Pharaoh, servants and so forth (Q 12:4–101);
- the story of the annunciation and birth of Jesus and the interaction between Mary, the angel, her baby and Mary's people (Q 19:16–34);
- five different stories of the young Abraham that involve his interaction with an adversary, his father, his people and their idols (Q 2:258; 11:69–73; 19:41–28; 26:70–82; 37:85–96);
- three extensive versions of the story of Moses in Egypt (Q 7:104–134; 26:16–62; 28:9–38) involving Moses, the princess of Egypt, his mother and sister, his flight from Egypt, his wife and father-in-law, Pharaoh, advisors, sorcerers, the Israelites and others;
- a piece of dialogue between Moses, his people and Aaron about the creation of their idol, which takes place during the exodus (Q 7:138–150);

- the story of Moses and God's servant (identified as Khiḍr by most exegetes (Q 18:60–82));
- two versions of the story of Lot (Q 11:77–81; 26:161–169);
- the story of Solomon and the queen of Sheba, typically identified as Bilqīs, which involves interaction with animals, *jinn* and the queen's advisers (Q 27:20–44).

Many of these dialogues pose challenges to any translator and/or exegete, regardless of target language. Some are elliptical, requiring additional information to understand what a speaker is referring or reacting to. On some occasions it is not clear who is speaking, and occasionally, a change of speaker is implied but not spelled out. Sometimes, it is not clear where a person's speech ends. To complicate things further, we do not always know who the speech is directed at, which is a particular problem when translating into a hierarchical language. There are also situations in which a person speaks first to one addressee, then to another, for example, when switching from talking to praying, and it is not always clear if and when that happens. The choice of register may in many of these cases assume an exegetical function, helping to mark a change of speaker and/or addressee, especially in *pegon* or *carakan* script where no quotation marks exist.

The Javanese exegetes consider all Qurʾanic text that is not direct speech by a specified speaker to be direct speech from God. For this reason, they generally render the Qurʾanic text in *ngoko*, since the hierarchy between God and His human audience is clear. The paratext, such as the introduction and footnotes, is written in *krama* because here it is the exegete himself who addresses his esteemed readers and therefore chooses a register that conveys politeness. The exception to this is Misbah Mustafa's *al-Iklīl*, where the author displays an unusually strong tendency to favor *ngoko* throughout, including in the brief foreword, but also in his translation of Qurʾanic speech acts.

General patterns and the idiosyncrasy of Misbah Mustafa's *al-Iklīl*

All in all, the previously listed segments of the Qurʾan contain just over 220 speech acts.[29] In roughly half of those speech acts, there is complete agreement between the Javanese exegetes with regard to the choice of register. Half of the differences in the remaining speech acts exclusively result from *al-Iklīl*'s striking preference for *ngoko* even in situations in which the other exegetes use *krama*.

The extent to which Misbah Mustafa differs from the other exegetes in this regard can clearly be seen in the number of instances in which the exegetes have speakers use *krama* in Qurʾanic dialogue, as shown in Table 5.2.

Furthermore, when Misbah Mustafa uses *krama*, it is with some *ngoko* suffixes and occasional lapses in word choice,[30] or he might even open a sentence in *krama* and continue in *ngoko* without expressing any change in speaker, addressee or the relationship dynamic between the two.[31] It is thus a toned-down, less elaborate version of *krama*.

Table 5.2 Use of *krama* in Javanese Qurʾan translations

Exegete/tafsīr	Uses of krama in speech acts (among c. 220–225 speech acts in the analyzed Qurʾanic segments)
Bagus Ngarpah	113 uses
Mohammad Adnan	115 uses
Ahmadiyya	101 uses
Bisri Musthofa	91 uses
Misbah Mustafa	21 uses

There are several possible reasons for *al-Iklīl's* idiosyncrasy. First of all, Misbah Mustafa's *pesantren* is located in a region of East Java where *krama* is comparatively less often used than in other variants of Javanese.[32] Another factor might be the relatively recent publication date of the work, at a time at which the egalitarian structure of the Indonesian language and the social changes of the nation-state period had already had a noticeable impact on the use of Javanese. That impact is also evident from the comparatively high number of Malay words in *al-Iklīl*'s version of Javanese. Furthermore, the intended audience clearly consists of children and villagers with little education, addressed by an aged and respected *kiai*, which makes the use of *ngoko* more likely (although not necessarily more likely than in our second "yellow book", *al-Ibrīz*). Finally, it is possible that the exegete prefers *ngoko* because he embraces the more egalitarian concept of society represented by that preference.

Misbah Mustafa does not opt for entirely egalitarian language, however; he makes ample use of honorifics and humilifics even when choosing *ngoko*. Besides, there are some situations that simply require *krama*. The first, and most unambiguous, set of situations to which this applies are those in which a creature is addressing God. A bigger difference in status than that which exists between God and His creatures is not conceivable. Conversely, God, of course, addresses His creatures in *ngoko*.

There are few other situations that are as clear cut. Generally, the use of *ngoko* in hierarchical situations is more often unequivocal among the exegetes than the use of *krama*. This is the case when parents – in most cases, fathers – talk to their children, when high-ranking persons talk to their servants and slaves and monarchs to their subjects or underlings. Conversely, there are only two types of relationship in which all five exegetes, including Misbah Mustafa, consistently[33] agree on the use of *krama*, other than those in which God is addressed: first, situations described in *Sūrat Yūsuf* (Q 12) in which Jacob is addressed by his sons and descendants,[34] and second, situations described in *Sūrat al-Naml* (Q 27) in which Solomon is addressed by creatures serving him, including the hoopoe and the *jinn*. In all other types of speech, there is at least a minimal amount of ambiguity or incoherence involved. This is curious, considering that there are many more instances in the Qurʾan where sons address fathers, or servants address kings, yet not all exegetes have them speak using *krama*. Clearly, other considerations play a role as well.

Religious status is one of these considerations; it is not synonymous with social status and may complicate otherwise unambiguous social hierarchies. This becomes

apparent when looking at the many cases in which Misbah Mustafa refuses to use *krama* while all the other exegetes resort to it, based on social requirements. He has Abraham address his pagan father in *ngoko*, whereas Jacob, who appears as a prophet in the Qurʾan, is addressed in *krama* by his sons. He has Moses and everyone else address Pharaoh in *ngoko*, while Solomon, who again is a prophet, as well as a king, is addressed in *krama* in several instances. Misbah Mustafa furthermore avoids *krama* in cases where the other exegetes have both parties use it to convey distance and politeness rather than difference in rank. This is true for the interaction between Moses and Khiḍr, as well as for interactions between humans and angels that are generally characterized by a high degree of politeness on both sides, for example, when the angels talk to Lot, to Mary and to Abraham and Sarah in order to announce the conception of Isaac.[35]

Moreover, Misbah Mustafa seems to have no interest in emphasizing hierarchical gender relations by having women use a particularly reverential mode of speech when talking to men. In contrast to the other exegetes, he has Zulaykhāʾ – which is the name attributed by the exegetes to the wife of Potiphar, Joseph's master, whom they call Qiṭfīr – use *ngoko* when talking to her husband and Bilqīs when talking to Solomon. The entire scene involving Moses, the women of Midian and their father is conducted in *ngoko*. Clearly, seniority and rank are of no concern to him either, unless there is some religious hierarchy involved as well. Misbah Mustafa has Moses address his, presumably much older, father-in-law in *ngoko*, despite the fact that he identifies him as the prophet Shuʿayb;[36] he has everyone address Pharaoh and Bilqīs in *ngoko*; and neither Moses' servant[37] nor Joseph during his stay with Qiṭfīr and Zulaykhāʾ address their masters in *krama*, in contrast to the other exegetes' construction of these situations. Using *ngoko* in all these situations might imply a certain measure of social critique since the hierarchical structure of the Javanese language is closely tied to a traditional social hierarchy, with an aristocracy demanding reverence and an inferior role assigned to women.[38]

Religious hierarchy, however, is important to Misbah Mustafa. When relating Joseph's interactions with his formal superiors, in particular, it is noticeable that *al-Iklīl* not only has him use *ngoko* in spite of the hierarchical social context but also describes him with honorific terms throughout. For example, in Q 12:26, when Joseph tells Qiṭfīr "She tried to seduce me", Bisri Musthofa, Bagus Ngarpah and Adnan translate the Arabic *qāla* ("he said") with the Javanese humilific *matur*, indicating that he speaks humbly to a superior, and the Ahmadiyya translators opt for the *ngoko* verb *calathu* (*clathu*), whereas *al-Iklīl* uses the honorific *ngendika*, thereby marking Joseph as a person of high status. Clearly, the focus here is on portraying Joseph as a prophet and as the hero of the story, not on the depiction of a realistic social interaction in which Joseph would have been an inferior. That this is not a coincidence is quite clear when one compares it to a line in which Moses is addressed by his people, again in *ngoko* as is the norm in *al-Iklīl*, but using the humilific *matur* because here, it is not a prophet who is talking but rather a prophet who is addressed by his followers. Generally, the use of humilifics and honorifics deserves further study because they add nuance beyond the choice of register.

Social and exegetical ambiguity

Roughly a quarter of the speech acts that I have examined appear to be fundamentally ambiguous, leading to divergent choices of register that go beyond *al-Iklīl*'s preference for *ngoko*. These ambiguities fall into two fundamentally different categories:

1 Social ambiguity: the exegetes agree on the social situation described by the Qurʾan and on the identification of speakers and addressees, which means they have an identical understanding of what the text means but disagree on the level of politeness that is required from one of the speakers.
2 Exegetical ambiguity: the exegetes have a different opinion on where speech begins and ends, the identity of the speaker and/or the identity of the addressee, which means they have divergent interpretations of the text that has an impact on their choice of register.

1. Ambiguous social situations and linguistic choices

Situations in which social ambiguity occurs fall into the following six constellations:

1 Dialogue between brothers, when there is a potential difference in age or rank.[39] For example, the hierarchy between Moses and Aaron (Q 7:142, 7:150) is not clear. Aaron is the older of the two, according to the Bible and Islamic tradition, and the Qurʾan mentions him as a messenger of God alongside Moses. On one occasion, Moses becomes angry with him for allowing their people to worship an idol, which seems to reverse the hierarchy established by Aaron's seniority. *Al-Ibrīz* resolves this ambiguity by having both of them use *krama*, this degree of politeness possibly indicating their prophetic status; *al-Iklīl* and the Ahmadiyya have both of them use *ngoko*, suggesting familiarity and equal rank, while Adnan and Bagus Ngarpah have Moses address his older brother in *krama* and Aaron address Moses in *ngoko*, emphasizing the principle of seniority, which Bagus Ngarpah explicitly points to by using the term *kakang* ("older brother"). The constellation between Joseph and his brothers is equally confusing: he is the second youngest, but also a prophet, and attains very high rank in Egypt where his brothers later come to ask for food. In the early stages of the story, Joseph's brothers generally address him in *ngoko*, but when they are confronted with him in his capacity as the king's vizier and do not know that he is their brother, they address him in *krama* (except in *al-Iklīl*). When they realize that the vizier is, in fact, their brother (Q 12:91), most exegetes have them continue using that style in deference to his rank, but the Ahmadiyya translation has them switch to *ngoko*, indicating familiarity. Conversely, Adnan and Bagus Ngarpah have Joseph switch to *krama* when talking to his brothers (Q 12:90, 92–93) because, due to his acknowledgment of their status as relations, they have become his seniors rather than foreign beggars. Just as in the case of Mary and the angel, this example shows that some exegetes use register as an exegetical device to indicate a shift in a relationship caused by the recognition of a person or a change in attitude.[40]

2 Dialogues between persons of potentially equal rank who are not close to each other, such as between Zulaykhāʾ and the noblewomen of Egypt.[41] Especially when there is a prophet involved, some exegetes – most notably Bisri Musthofa and Mohammad Adnan – tend to have others use *krama* towards that person even when his prophethood cannot be known to his interlocutors, for example, when the fellow prisoners first address Joseph, or when Moses is addressed by a hostile man in Q 28:19.
3 Addressing non-believing kings who are of high worldly but low religious rank or their representatives. While Bisri Musthofa has everyone nearly[42] consistently address them in *ngoko*, the other exegetes are neither in agreement nor entirely consistent with regard to this constellation. They are fairly unanimous in having everyone address the king of Egypt in the story of Joseph in *krama*, and the queen of Sheba's advisors choose *krama* when talking to her. The situation is less clear when the king's messengers visit Joseph in prison, where only Adnan and Bagus Ngarpah have him respond in *krama*, and when Solomon talks to Bilqīs, where only the Ahmadiyya opts for *krama*. The greatest ambiguity occurs when the king in question is a negative figure prone to asking his subjects to worship him. This is true for Abraham's interlocutor in Q 2:258, whom most exegetes identify as Nimrod; only *al-Ibrīz* has Abraham talk in *krama* here. The treatment of Pharaoh in the story of Moses is likewise inconsistent. In some dialogues, all the exegetes except for Misbah Mustafa have everyone address Pharaoh in *krama*, as would be socially appropriate.[43] In others, *al-Ibrīz* and *al-Iklīl* both choose *ngoko*. In one case, when Pharaoh's sorcerers accept Moses' religion, their switch from *krama* to *ngoko* in *al-Ibrīz* might be an exegetical device meant to demonstrate that they have stopped accepting Pharaoh's claim (Q 7:125–126, 26:50–51), but in other situations it appears to be an inconsistency, or it might reflect the exegete's understanding that they are addressing Moses or the crowd rather than Pharaoh.[44]
4 Some interactions between an individual and a people, or group of people. Here, the problem often is that the Qurʾan does not provide detailed descriptions and it is thus not always clear whether the collective is composed of high-ranking persons or whether the individual talking to them has a high rank within the collective. Therefore, only Bagus Ngarpah and Adnan have Lot's people address him in *krama* (Q 11:79, 26:167). There is also disagreement on how the Egyptians address Moses when they ask him to intercede with his God on their behalf after having been subjected to divine punishments.[45] In one case (Q 19:48), Adnan has Abraham use *ngoko* because he is addressing his people, whereas the other exegetes, except for Misbah Mustafa, have him address his father and therefore use *krama*.
5 Babies and infants talking. These situations are confusing because, normally, very small children would use *ngoko*, while older children would be expected to use *krama* towards their seniors. The children depicted in the Qurʾan are too young to talk at all, though, and yet they speak like adults: the entire situation is cast as miraculous in the Qurʾan. Moreover, when the newborn Jesus addresses Mary's folk, it is a very young prophet talking. This is probably why

most exegetes have him use *ngoko*, although the Ahmadiyya translation opts for *krama* (Q 19:26, 30–33). In another situation, a witness from the family of the Zulaykhāʾ, after she had tried to seduce Joseph, suggests a way to find out whether Joseph or the woman is the guilty party when she falsely accuses him of assaulting her (Q 12:26–27). In the commentary section of *al-Iklīl*, Misbah Mustafa adduces an exegetical tradition according to which that witness was still a baby. Bisri Musthofa and Bagus Ngarpah accept that tradition to the degree that they simply translate the "witness from her family" as "a baby". In the case of Bagus Ngarpah and Misbah Mustafa, this results in the baby speaking *ngoko*. With Bagus Ngarpah, this is intriguing, because he has Joseph and Zulaykhāʾ address Potiphar in *krama*. This is another instance in which Adnan completely disagrees with Bagus Ngarpah's reading of the verse: he specifies that the speaker is a member of Zulaykhāʾ's household and has that household member use *krama*.

6 Finally, interactions between women and angels differ slightly from interactions between angels and the male prophets Abraham and Lot. When it comes to Mary, only Bagus Ngarpah, Adnan and the Ahmadiyya commentary use *krama* throughout (Q 19:18–21, 24–26). Bisri Musthofa has the angels address Lot, Abraham and Sara in *krama*, but when talking to Mary, Jibrīl uses *ngoko*; apparently, from his perspective, there is a difference in gender and age that matters. When it comes to Sara, it is Bagus Ngarpah who has the angels address her in *ngoko* (Q 11:73), while they use *krama* when talking to her husband Abraham. This is one of the few occasions in which Adnan makes a different choice, rendering the angels' speech to Sara in *krama*; moreover, he completely retranslates the verse.

Some of the differences between the translations seem random. In the case of the *kitab kuning*, the translation decisions made by the authors might reflect the oral origins of the genre. In contrast, the literary style employed in Bagus Ngarpah's and Adnan's work and the Ahmadiyya translation sometimes engenders a higher level of politeness, especially in situations in which strangers, royalty, senior or noble persons are addressed. Bisri Musthofa, Bagus Ngarpah and Adnan appear to have a slightly heightened emphasis on the politeness owed to prophets.

If one can draw conclusions from the different constellations described here, it seems that there are three main causes of ambiguity involved in equivocal register choices. First, considerations of religious status may clash with worldly hierarchies, and the involvement of women may create additional confusion. Second, the situations described in the Qurʾan are frequently unfamiliar and do not match the exegetes' social experience; this is particularly obvious when angels or talking babies are involved. And third, the Qurʾanic narratives are sometimes too unspecific or elliptical to allow for a clear reconstruction of social hierarchies. For example, in the story of Moses' youth in Q 28, he is involved with a great many persons: men belonging to his own group and to his enemies, a man coming "from the furthest part of town" to warn him of his impending death at the hands of the Egyptian

authorities, the women from Midian, their father and so forth. But from the Qurʾan alone, it is impossible to glean much about their status relative to Moses.

2. Exegetical choices and the **tafsīr** *tradition*

The problem is exacerbated when it is not even clear who is talking, who is listening and when the speech act ends. It is here that the choice of register is inextricably tied to exegetical decisions and sometimes constitutes such an exegetical decision in itself.

In Q 12:83–84, we find Jacob addressing his sons after they have returned from Egypt, informing him that Benjamin has been kept back for alleged theft.

> Their father said: "No! Your souls have prompted you to do wrong! But it is best to be patient: may God bring all of them back to me – He alone is the All Knowing, the All Wise," and he turned away from them, saying, "Alas for Joseph!"

Who is Jacob talking to when he says "Alas for Joseph!"? To himself? Still to his sons, despite having turned away from them? Or is he addressing God, in some kind of prayer? A Javanese exegete needs to at least distinguish the latter option from the first two because it would most definitely require *krama* – which is the choice that Bagus Ngarpah and Mohammad Adnan make, in contrast to the other Javanese translators. They say explicitly that Jacob is praying to God; the choice of *krama* is therefore not the main indicator of his exegetical decision, but it is nevertheless a necessary consequence of it.

The Qurʾan contains a number of dialogues that are confusing because it is not always clear who is speaking, when the speaker changes, what they are reacting to, what is left out and when they are finished. For example, Q 27:42–43 contains a piece of dialogue between, presumably, Solomon and Bilqīs after Bilqīs has arrived at Solomon's palace. Solomon had previously had her throne brought there and disguised. In a fairly literal translation, without quotation marks and insertions, the passage goes:

> **42** When she arrived, it was said, Is your throne like this throne?
> She said, As if it is,
> And we were given knowledge before her (it?), and we submitted ourselves,
> **43** And she was prevented by what she worshipped instead of God. She came from a disbelieving people.[46]

The two verses can be divided into up to four segments. There is considerable disagreement between exegetes with regard to that division and the assignment of speakers to these segments. Some of the Javanese exegetes' decisions are barely comprehensible without knowledge of the broader exegetical discussions on these verses in the *tafsīr* tradition, especially concerning the second half of the exchange.

Table 5.3 shows how the Javanese exegetes deal with the two verses and the speech acts they contain.

In the first segment, the main cause of ambiguity is the identity of the speaker, which is disguised by the use of a passive verb. Adnan and Bagus Ngarpah specify that it is Solomon himself; in the other commentaries, it is unclear. The Ahmadiyya translators are the only ones to have the speaker use *krama* in deference to Bilqīs' royal status, indicating that he might be a servant of Solomon. In the second segment, everyone agrees that it is Bilqīs speaking. They probably assume that she is addressing Solomon which is evident from her use of *krama* in all translations except *al-Iklīl*.

After this, things become complicated. There are multiple ambiguities involved, starting with the fact that the Qurʾan does not specify the speaker or speakers of the third and fourth segment. The use of the first-person plural in the phrase "we were given knowledge before her, and we submitted ourselves" might refer to an actual plural or constitute a *pluralis maiestatis*, which either Solomon or Bilqīs are entitled to use. The ambiguity is increased on the part of the target language because in Javanese, neither the plural nor the past tense of verbs is always specified, although they can be.

The *tafsīr* tradition is divided with regard to the question of who utters the phrase "and we were given knowledge before her, and we submitted ourselves". Some assign it to Solomon, some to Bilqīs. In both cases, the statement is elliptical. If it is Solomon, then it has to be assumed that the Qurʾan failed to include the word *qāla* ("he said") in order to mark the start of his speech after Bilqīs' has ended. If it is Bilqīs, the phrase is a natural continuation of her previous speech but exegetes need to explain whom or what the pronoun "her" in the phrase "we were given knowledge before her" refers to. Bilqīs would be the most obvious point of reference, but that cannot be the case if she herself is speaking. In Arabic, it is possible that the pronoun refers to any grammatically female noun, including objects, which allows for creative solutions. Thus, the exegete al-Qurṭubī (d. 671/1272) summarizes the main exegetical opinions as follows:

> "And we were given knowledge before her." It was said that this is Bilqīs' speech, meaning: we were given knowledge of the authenticity of Solomon's prophethood before this sign [*āya*, grammatically female] that lies in the throne. "And we submitted ourselves", i.e. we consented to following his command. And it was said [by others] that this is Solomon's speech, meaning: we were given knowledge before this woman of Allah's power to do what He wishes. And it was said [that he meant]: "We were given knowledge" of her acceptance of Islam and her coming in obedience before she actually came. And it was said: It is the speech of Solomon's people. And God knows best.[48]

There are thus two main exegetical opinions in the *tafsīr* tradition: First, that this is Solomon's speech, in which he claims to have received knowledge before Bilqīs, and second, that this is Bilqīs' speech, in which she says that she has received

Table 5.3 Javanese exegetes' translation of Q 27:42–43, translated into English (*krama* marked in italics, *krama* inggil honorifics underlined, *krama* andhap humilifics doubly underlined)

Bagus Ngarpah	Adnan	Ahmadiyya	Bisri Musthofa	Misbah Mustafa
When Queen Bilqīs arrived, she was asked by the Prophet Solomon, "Queen Bilqīs, is your Throne like this Throne?"	When she arrived, she was asked by Solomon, "Queen Bilqīs, is your Throne like this Throne?"	When she came, it was said to her, *Is your throne like this one*?	Thus, when Bilqīs came, she was asked, Is your Throne (which you have left in your kingdom in Saba) like this one here?	When Bilqīs came into the presence of the Prophet Solomon, she was asked: Is your throne like this one here?
Queen Bilqīs said, "*Yes, just like it!*	Queen Bilqīs said, "*Yes, just like it!*	She said, *Yes, it seems as if it is*,	Bilqīs replied, *it seems as if my Throne is indeed this one* .	Bilqīs replied, It seems as if this throne is my throne.
Before it, I have known the miracle that He sent which I am seeing now, and I have also known that He who sent it is truly a prophet. Verily, now I enter the religion of Islam, obeying His command .	*Before it, I have been given knowledge (of the miracle that He sent). Verily, now I enter the religion of Islam (submission)* .	*and before this, I have been given knowledge; furthermore, we have submitted ourselves* .	(The Prophet Solomon said,) We have been given knowledge before Bilqīs, and we have [entered] Islam.	I have been given knowledge, i.e. an understanding of Solomon's prophethood, by Allah before the sign appeared, i.e. this proof of [his] prophethood. And we have submitted ourselves in obedience to Solomon.
The Prophet Solomon said, Queen Bilqīs ceased worshipping something other than Allah, i.e. worshipping the sun; verily, the Noble Queen Bilqīs was then still among the unbelievers.	(Solomon said) And whoever worships something other than Allah (i.e. worships the sun). Verily, Queen Bilqīs was then still among the unbelievers.	And what was worshipped other than Allah, it prevented her, indeed she then belonged to a people of unbelievers.	And Bilqīs was worshipping something other than Allah. It prevented her from worshipping Allah Taʿālā. Verily, Bilqīs belonged to a people of unbelievers. [Past tense not indicated grammatically.][47]	What kept Bilqīs from worshipping Allah was her worshipping something other than Allah, that is, the sun. Bilqīs was among people who are unbelievers. [Past tense not indicated grammatically.]

knowledge before Solomon had her throne moved, an event that is characterized by a female noun such as *āya* ("sign") or *muʿjiza* ("miracle") and which the pronoun "her" refers to despite the fact that that noun had not been mentioned before.

Of the five Javanese exegetes, only Bisri Musthofa embraces the first opinion. The other translations are all in favor of the second one. The main exegetical problem inherent in this solution, that is, the Arabic female pronoun in the expression "before her", is not discernible in the Javanese translation because the Javanese language has no gendered pronouns. And indeed, in the Ahmadiyya translation, it simply reads as "before this/it", with no further explanation in the text or notes. Even Muhammad Ali converted the Arabic "her" into an English "it" without comment. Bagus Ngarpah, Adnan and Misbah Mustafa do not gloss over this exegetical problem quite as nonchalantly; they opt to spell out the solution proposed by the *tafsīr* tradition, namely reading the pronoun as a reference to the "sign" (*āya*) or "miracle" (*muʿjiza*) that the moving of Bilqīs's throne constitutes. Bagus Ngarpah and Adnan then seem to assume that Bilqīs' knowledge refers to her understanding of the miracle that Solomon had performed, while Misbah Mustafa thinks it refers to her belief in Solomon's prophethood. In either case, the explanations provided by these three exegetes are mainly meant to mark their position in a long-standing exegetical debate and are hard to understand without knowledge of that debate.

Another exegetical problem the translators face has to do with the Arabic phrase *wa-kunnā muslimīn*, which could be understood as "we embraced Islam" or, according to the original semantics of the term *muslim*, "we submitted ourselves (to God)", or even "we submitted ourselves (to Solomon)". Typically, when the term *islām* and its derivatives are used in the Qurʾan, the premodern exegetical tradition tends to read them as references to the religion of Islam, or at least as submission to a monotheistic God. In this light, it is interesting that al-Qurṭubī, whose interpretation is echoed by many other exegetes, would assume that if it is Bilqīs speaking here, her words should be read as submission to Solomon, establishing a clear – and clearly gendered – hierarchy between the two. Misbah Mustafa explicitly follows that interpretation, while the Ahmadiyya commentary does not resolve the ambiguity inherent in the phrase, and the other exegetes translate it conventionally as the acceptance of Islam.

The fourth segment, again, is ambiguous. If the third segment is treated as Bilqīs' speech, then the fourth one cannot be a continuation of that because it speaks of her in the third person. The Ahmadiyya translation and Misbah Mustafa therefore clearly treat it not as direct speech but as an utterance of the divine author of the Qurʾan; in the case of the Ahmadiyya, this is made obvious by the change of register from Bilqīs' *krama* to the *ngoko* of the general text. This is in line with what most premodern exegetes seem to presume, or sometimes explicitly state.[49] They mainly disagree on whether it was Solomon who prevented her from further worshipping something other than God, namely the sun, or whether the worship of the sun prevented her from worshipping God. The Javanese exegetes all follow the second opinion. Bagus Ngarpah and Adnan, however, go against the exegetical mainstream in that they consider this segment Solomon's speech. In the case of Bisri Musthofa, it is impossible to tell from the translation whether this is God

speaking or a continuation of Solomon's speech. It becomes clear from an additional comment with the heading "story" (*qiṣṣa*), though, that he agrees with Adnan and Bagus Ngarpah.

This is one of several situations where the choice of register is dependent on interpretation and is sometimes even the clearest indicator of that interpretation.[50] Often, the chosen interpretation is embedded in the *tafsīr* tradition and can hardly be understood without it. The Ahmadiyya commentary tries to refrain from adding any more interpretation than necessary to the text of the translation, but even there the choice of register sometimes makes it impossible to retain the ambiguity of either the Arabic source text or the English Muhammad Ali translation.[51]

Khiḍr, Shuʿayb and Nimrod: identifying unnamed persons in the Qurʾan

On many occasions in the Qurʾan, the persons who speak or are spoken to are not identified by name at all, and their age or social rank might not be clear either. In some of these cases, the exegetical tradition, or important strands of it, identify that person with a named king or prophet. If that identification is accepted, a different polite mode of speech might be needed than if an unspecific stranger is speaking or being spoken to. Javanese exegetes are then faced with a choice of register that is inextricably tied to the role they accord to the *tafsīr* tradition.

Generally, the exegetes' choices are highly consistent in this regard, indicating that all exegetes' fundamental attitude towards the *tafsīr* tradition is unequivocal and firmly established. The English Ahmadiyya translation by Muhammad Ali, following a literalist and modernist approach, rejects all attempts to identify unnamed persons in the Qurʾan on the basis of narrative exegetical traditions, no matter whose authority they are based on, and the Javanese translators of his work nearly always follow it faithfully in this. Conversely, the four other Javanese exegetes unabashedly embrace these traditions and the ascriptions contained in them.

For example, it is clear to Bagus Ngarpah, Mohammad Adnan, Bisri Musthofa and Misbah Mustafa that the person described in Q 18:65 as "one of Our servants – a man to whom We had granted Our mercy and whom We had given knowledge of Our own" is Khiḍr, a matter on which there is practically a consensus in the *tafsīr* works. They also unanimously consider Khiḍr a prophet (*nabī*), which is actually contested; according to the *Tafsīr al-Jalālayn*, the majority of exegetes reject this opinion and instead categorize Khiḍr as an "intimate friend" (*walī*) of God.[52] In contrast, the Ahmadiyya translation ignores the exegetical tradition and makes no attempt to identify that person. Muhammad Ali's extensive footnote on the story claims that it is entirely about Moses, not his teacher, and casts some doubt on whether it is even meant to describe a historical event or whether it rather functions as a parable foreshadowing the stages of Moses' later prophetic mission.[53] Nevertheless, the Javanese Ahmadiyya translators have Moses and his interlocutor employ a high degree of politeness. In this case, they would have been able to make that choice without needing additional information because the Qurʾanic narrative is fairly extensive and gives a clear impression of the social dynamics between the two persons involved.

In a similar case, Q 2:258 mentions an unnamed man, described as an unbeliever, who disputes with Abraham, claiming to have the power to give life and death. This person is generally identified by exegetes as King Nimrod, and four out of the five Javanese exegetes follow that opinion. The Ahmadiyya translators, however, based on Muhammad Ali's approach, make no mention of the name. Muhammad Ali asserts that the phrase "because God had given him the kingdom" does not refer to the adversary's worldly power but rather to God's promise to Abraham and his descendants – "him" referring to Abraham, not the interlocutor.[54] He supports his argument with references to the Bible, which none of the other Javanese exegetes would dream of doing. Unlike Muhammad Ali, they were not writing for a partly Christian audience and consequently saw no need to defend Islam against external criticism, in addition to which they were obviously unfamiliar with Christian and Jewish sources. Since Muhammad Ali accords Abraham's interlocutor no royal status, the Javanese rendering, despite its general penchant for politeness, has no need to have Abraham employ *krama* in this dialogue. Conversely, Bisri Musthofa and Adnan explicitly call Nimrod a king, and Bisri Musthofa and Bagus Ngarpah (but curiously, not Adnan) have Abraham use *krama* when talking to him.

The approach of the Ahmadiyya translation is perhaps most intriguing when it comes to the story of Moses in Midian because here the Javanese translators, knowingly or unconsciously, part ways with Muhammad Ali. The story as described in Q 28:22–28 goes as follows:

> As he made his way towards Midian, he was saying, "May my Lord guide me to the right way". When he arrived at Midian's waters, he found a group of men watering [their flocks], and beside them two women keeping their flocks back, so he said, "What is the matter with you two?" They said, "We cannot water [our flocks] until the shepherds take their sheep away: our father is a very old man". He watered their flocks for them, withdrew into the shade, and prayed, "My Lord, I am in dire need of whatever good thing You may send me", and then one of the two women approached him, walking shyly, and said, "My father is asking for you: he wants to reward you for watering our flocks for us". When Moses came to him and told him his story, the old man said, "Do not be afraid, you are safe now from people who do wrong". One of the women said, "Father, hire him: a strong, trustworthy man is the best to hire". The father said, "I would like to marry you to one of these daughters of mine, on condition that you serve me for eight years: if you complete ten, it will be of your own free will. I do not intend to make things difficult for you: God willing, you will find I am a fair man". Moses said, "Let that be the agreement between us – whichever of the two terms I fulfil, let there be no injustice to me – God is witness to what we say".

Most premodern exegetes identify Moses' employer and father-in-law as Shuʿayb, one of God's messengers whose story is repeatedly told in the Qurʾan. The main argument for this is that the story of Moses takes place in Midian, which is where, according to the Qurʾan, Shuʿayb was sent with his message (Q 7:85, 11:84).

Al-Ṭabarī (d. 310/923) quotes traditions that identify Moses' father-in-law with Shuʿayb, but he also cites a number of traditions that say he was called Yathrūn or Yathrā (Jethro), which is his biblical name. Nevertheless, his designation as Shuʿayb became pervasive. This annoyed the eminent Mamluk scholar Ibn Taymiyya (d. 728/1328) so much that he wrote a treatise about the reasons for which it is simply impossible that the old man whom Moses met in Midian could have been the prophet Shuʿayb.[55] However, most later exegetes, with the exception of Ibn Kathīr (d. 774/1373), ignored his objections: the *Tafsīr al-Jalālayn* laconically remarks on the man's identity, "and he was Shuʿayb, peace be upon him".[56]

Unsurprisingly, given this exegetical backstory, Bagus Ngarpah, Mohammad Adnan, Bisri Musthofa and Misbah Mustafa are convinced that Moses' father-in-law is the prophet Shuʿayb. Misbah Mustafa has the two men interact in *ngoko*, as he typically does. Adnan and Bisri Musthofa, however, construct a hierarchy: they have Moses address Shuʿayb in *krama* while he talks to Moses in *ngoko*. This makes sense both in terms of religious status and of seniority: at the time at which the story takes place, Moses has not received his divine calling yet, and he is also considerably younger than Shuʿayb.

As for the Ahmadiyya approach to the identity of Moses' father-in-law, again unsurprisingly, Muhammad Ali calls him Jethro in a footnote in such a casual manner that it is clear that he takes the biblical narrative and the reader's knowledge of it for granted:

> Christian critical opinion discovers here another confusion. Because Jacob had made an agreement with Laban to serve him for seven years as a condition of marrying one of his daughters (Gen. 29:18), it is alleged that this fact in the *trustworthy* Bible history must have been present to [sic] the Prophet's mind in a confused state, giving rise to the story relating to Moses' marriage. The slightest similarity in incidents, like similarity of names, gives rise – in the mind of the Christian critic – to a conclusion of confusion and anachronism where the Qur-án is concerned. According to Rabbinical accounts Moses lived with Jethro for ten years, which corroborates the Quranic story in substance (see *Jewish En.*), and there is nothing improbable in the circumstance that he may have served him during that period in consideration of marrying one of his daughters.[57]

Muhammad Ali's main concern here is to stave off Christian allegations against the Qurʾan and, in order to do so, prove the Qurʾan's compatibility with the biblical account, which is considered *ipso facto* authentic. Against that backdrop, the assumption that Moses' father-in-law is the biblical Jethro is a given and not worth any particular explanation or justification.

The Javanese Ahmadiyya translators, as they usually do, render Muhammad Ali's entire footnote into Javanese. Their translation of the last sentence of the note, which mentions the name of Moses' father-in-law, goes as follows:

> Miturut cacariyosan ingkang pinanggih wonten ing kitab-kitabipun agami Yahudi, Kanjeng Nabi Musa naté ngèngèr Kanjeng Nabi Syu'aib ngantos

> sadasa taun, dados punika ngiyataken lajering cariyos ingkang kasebut ing Quran (*mirsanana Yewish En*.), sarta inggih boten nama nglengkara Kanjeng Nabi Musa ngantos sadasa-nan taun anggènipun andhèrèk Kanjeng nabi Syu'aib karana badhé anggarwa ingkang putra Kanjeng Nabi Syu'aib wau.[58]
>
> According to the narrative that can be found in the books of the Jewish religion, the Noble Prophet Moses served the Noble Prophet Shuʿayb until ten years had passed, so this corroborates the essence of the story that is mentioned in the Qurʾan (*see Jewish En*.), and it cannot at all be considered impossible that the Noble Prophet Musa stayed with the Noble Prophet Shuʿayb for up to around ten years because he wanted to marry one of the daughters of that Noble Prophet Shuʿayb.

While it seems that they conscientiously translate Muhammad Ali's apologetic explanation, the Javanese translators have replaced the name "Jethro" with the name "Shuʿayb". They have also added a number of epithets because Muhammad Ali's laconic way of writing about "Moses" or "the Prophet" or even "Muḥammad" without eulogies or adjectives apparently does not translate well into the kind of Javanese that addresses pious Muslim audiences.

Why change Jethro into Shuʿayb? It may be an unconscious substitution of a name that was unfamiliar to men who were raised in the *pesantren* tradition; they might without second thought have replaced "Jethro" with the name they had probably unambiguously been taught. Or is it a conscious distortion? If the latter is the case, two possible reasons for such a move come to mind. Either the Javanese translators wanted to protect Muhammad Ali's commentary, which was already under attack in Indonesia at the time, from allegations of following a Christian agenda, or they actually disagreed with Muhammad Ali on this point. Even Muhammad Ali seems to have had second thoughts, or else he saw a need to adapt his commentary to Muslim audiences. Later versions of his English translation and commentary, as well his independent Urdu translation and commentary, integrate the Shuʿayb traditions.[59] The Javanese Ahmadiyya translation is firmly based on Ali's 1917 edition, but we do not know whether the translators, at a later stage of their work, had access to other editions, whether they made the decision to use the name Shuʿayb themselves, or whether it even was a conscious decision; the translation has no introduction that could inform us of their methods and agenda.

Also, in contrast to Muhammad Ali, the Javanese translators of his work place great emphasis on the prophethood of both Moses and Shuʿayb, not taking into consideration the fact that at this stage in his life Moses was not actually a prophet yet. Consequently, they are the only Javanese exegetes who have both men address each other in *krama*, even when Moses is speaking to his senior. Despite the modernist approach of the work that they translate, here they fall back into a rather traditionalist pattern without actually departing much from Muhammad Ali's words. From this case study, it becomes clear that the Javanese translators have their own exegetical background and adapt their work to a Javanese Muslim target audience that differs from the, at least partly Christian, audience that Muhammad Ali had in mind.

Conclusion

The analysis of these five Javanese works of Qurʾan translation and Qurʾanic exegesis has shed light on their characteristics and particularities. Bagus Ngarpah and Mohammed Adnan use a literary style to produce something between a Qurʾan translation and a concise, paraphrastic commentary embedded in the *tafsīr* tradition which contains some narrative elements, and is clearly meant for readers rather than listeners. The Ahmadiyya translators, also in a highly literary style, aim to faithfully reproduce Muhammad Ali's literalist translation with its modernist commentary that is closer to the Bible than the *tafsīr* tradition, but on occasion they are caught up in their traditional Muslim education. In contrast, Bisri Musthofa's and Misbah Mustafa's commentaries are based on an oral mode of teaching and draw on markedly narrative modes of *tafsīr*. Misbah Mustafa's translation is noteworthy because of his adoption of a colloquial style with minimal use of register variation, while Bisri Musthofa has a strikingly high amount of narrative embellishment. Beyond this assessment of the individual commentaries and their strategies, I draw four more general conclusions from my study of Javanese *tafsīr* and its approach to Qurʾanic dialogue.

1. Translation and tafsīr

The study of Javanese Qurʾanic commentaries complicates the boundaries between translation and *tafsīr* as well as the concept of translation itself. Even the Javanese translation of Muhammad Ali's commentary does not quite escape the narratives that underpin the *tafsīr* tradition, despite the fact that it is based on a literalist work that takes pains not to add anything to the Qurʾanic text and draws more on the Bible than on *tafsīr* in its commentary. The close reading of works that attempt to render Qurʾanic narratives into a hierarchical language demonstrates that it is next to impossible to establish a sufficiently clear social context for those narratives without drawing on either *tafsīr* or the Bible, which embeds even the most concise Qurʾan translations inextricably into an exegetical backstory. With the exception of the Ahmadiyya translation, in which commentary is strictly relegated to the notes, the Javanese exegetes have no qualms about adding information to their rendering of the Qurʾan. They do not pursue the notion of a literal translation but rather aim to deliver a coherent narrative that fills in the most conspicuous gaps and answers the most pressing open questions. This is the reason for which none of them labels their work a "translation", because that concept, in their own view as in much of the relevant scholarship, is tied to a particular genre – essentially, it is what Muhammad Ali does, minus the notes. There are all kinds of translation practices beyond that genre, though, including some that aim to make the Qurʾan accessible to Arab readers; even the *Tafsīr al-Jalālayn* could be counted among them in some ways, and so can all the Javanese *tafsīr* works discussed here. What the Javanese scholars want to provide is not a commentary, a discussion of exegetical problems or a summary of the most important interpretations and relevant traditions. Rather, they essentially present the meaning of the Qurʾan according to their own understanding

and in their own voice, without the semblance of faithful literalism that we tend to associate with the concept of "translation". Categorizing translation as a genre of exegesis might be a truism, but the reverse is also true: some types of exegesis amount to little more than a form of translation. What Bagus Ngarpah, Mohammad Adnan, Bisri Musthofa and Misbah Mustafa achieve is a rendition of the Qurʾanic narrative into their target language, undertaken in a way that will allow their readers to make sense of the text, and that is precisely the function of translation.

2. Broadening the range of target languages to better understand the Qurʾan

The target language of translation and the structures it provides are important. That might seem like another truism, but its implications have largely remained unexplored for the field of Qurʾan translation because the only target language that has garnered serious attention during the past decades has been English. Other languages not only have vastly different grammatical, syntactical and semantical structures; they also have different literary styles, traditions of Muslim religious learning and cultural contexts. Studying how translators make sense of the Qurʾan in these languages does not only open up new perspectives on the religious and literary culture of the target language and the societies in which it is spoken or written. It also helps us gain a perspective on what the Qurʾan means to its readers in a variety of different contexts. This is important because a text itself has no meaning without readers to extract it. It also tells us something about the Qurʾanic source text itself. Each target language imposes its own demands which open up new fields of ambiguity: unspecific descriptions have to be specified, or ellipses have to be filled because the target language demands it. For English readers and translators, it might be irrelevant whether Moses' interlocutor is a prophet or a nobleman or whether he is younger or older than he, but for Javanese translators it is vital to know these things. Thinking about such issues facilitates new insights into the Qurʾan. Javanese approaches to the Qurʾan enable us to appreciate the egalitarian quality of its language that we might otherwise not notice. It also enables us to see how gender-conscious Qurʾanic Arabic is, much in contrast to Javanese. Broadening the range of target languages of Qurʾan translations that we study, not just historically or ethnographically, but philologically, can shed new light on the Qurʾan itself.

3. The reader's social world

The process of translating, and even reading, the Qurʾan is shaped by the readers' social world and its structures, which determine how the gaps left by the source text are filled. Uncovering such orientations is essential to the study of *tafsīr*, of course.[60] However, our understanding is limited by center-periphery concepts that locate the productions of norms and doctrines in the Middle East whereas other regions are relegated to the realm of anthropology, with a focus on practice rather than texts and deviation rather than contributions to normativity.[61] These are highly problematic premises. Each exegete, whether in the thirteenth or twenty-first century and

whether in Egypt or on Java, reads the Qurʾan from the perspective of his or her social experience and normative ideals. Often-unconscious attitudes towards seniority, gender roles, nobility and religious hierarchy, as well as a personal history of religious socialization, training and the formation of belief influence how the text is read. It can be hard to glean these preconditions from a Qurʾan translation due to its brevity, but then again, it can also be particularly easy precisely because the conciseness of the genre, coupled with the structural features of the target language, enforce decisions rather than allowing for evasiveness. The Javanese translators of Muhammad Ali might have wanted to faithfully render his rather literal translation, but the existence of register in their target language nevertheless forces them to make choices, even when not overtly discussing the identity of persons or the separation between speech acts. A non-hierarchical rendering of Qurʾanic dialogue into Javanese would be possible but it would by no means be a neutral option: it would be a statement that tells us something about the translator, just as the use of gender-inclusive language in a twenty-first-century English translation would.

4. The importance of imaginaries

Last but not least, the study of Qurʾanic exegesis and Qurʾan translation must pay more attention to the role of imagination and narrative, rather than treating exegesis as a purely academic affair or buying into the Salafi doctrine that considers most of the narrative traditions on the Qurʾan to be *isrāʾīliyyāt*: untrustworthy stories of Jewish or Christian origin. This is all the more important if we take into consideration the important educational function of *tafsīr*. A commentary such as *al-Ibrīz* cannot merely be read as a written, academic work that enlightens students with regard to semantics, relevant hadiths or dogmatic problems raised by the Qurʾan. Rather, Bisri Musthofa tells his students about the Qurʾan by fleshing out elliptic Qurʾanic stories with a mix of narrative traditions and his own imagination. Many of his choices are more concerned with emotional depth and social interaction than with historicity, authenticity or academic scholarship. On occasion, it is precisely that type of imagination that enables exegetes to beautifully capture and subtly describe shifts in human relationships through the use of register – just as Bisri Musthofa managed when the angel turned from intruder to divine messenger in Mary's eyes.

Notes

1 Unless otherwise noted, English Qurʾan translations in this chapter are loosely based on the translation by M. A. S. Abdel Haleem, with adaptations regarding punctuation and style and with occasional modifications in order to clarify the exegetical problem at hand and the Javanese translators' choices.
2 There is also an intermediate level called *krama madya* that enriches *ngoko* with some features of *krama* and some specific *madya* forms, but that is mostly a matter of spoken Javanese and does not occur in the texts I am analyzing in this chapter.
3 For a more extensive discussion of registers, including the intermediate register of *madya*, see Ward Keeler, *Javanese: A Cultural Approach* (Athens: Ohio University Center for International Studies, 1984), xvii–xxiii, with further references.

4 Mark Woodward, *Java, Indonesia and Islam* (Dordrecht: Springer, 2014), 14–19; Nancy J. Smith-Hefner, "Language Shift, Gender, and Ideologies of Modernity in Central Java, Indonesia", *Journal of Linguistic Anthropology* 19, no. 1 (2009), 57–77.

5 Bisri Musthofa's commentary, *al-Ibrīz*, was originally printed in *pegon*, that is, Arabic script, and recently in Latin script; see Bishrī Muṣṭafā, *Al-Ibrīz li-maʿrifat tafsīr al-Qurʾān al-ʿazīz* (Kudus: Manārā, n.d.), and Bisri Musthofa, *Al-Ibriiz Lima'rifatil Qur'anil Aziz Bahasa Jawa Latin* (Kudus: Menara, 2015). The latter version uses a phonetic spelling that differs from the spelling commonly used in dictionaries and literary texts as well as the other two Javanese Qurʾan translations printed in Latin script. My quotations from *al-Ibrīz* follow the more common system of spelling, rather than the phonetic spelling of the Latin script edition.

6 Bagus Ngarpah, *Kuran Jawi*, Latin transcript of a *carakan* manuscript, www.sastra.org/katalog/judul?ti_id=1885, accessed 11 February 2023; Mohammad Adnan, *Tafsir al-Qur'an Suci (Basa Jawi)* (Bandung: Alma'arif, 1985), 442–443; Muhammad Ali, *Qur'an Suci Jarwa Jawi*, trans. Minhadjurrahman Djajasugita and M. Mufti Sharif (Jakarta: Darul Kutubil Islamiyah, 2001), 831.

7 Miṣbāḥ b. Zayn al-Muṣṭafā, *Al-Iklīl fī maʿānī al-tanzīl* (Surabaya: al-Iḥsān, n.d.), 16: 2881–2882.

8 Muṣṭafā, *Al-Ibrīz*, 2: 939–940, conforming to Musthofa, *Al-Ibriiz*, 306; Masjid al-Huda (ed.), *Tarjamah Al-Qur'an Basa Jawi* (Masjid al-Huda: Ngabeyan, n.d.), 16: 20. The latter is part of a series of copied booklets. *Juzʾ* 16 was given to me by a participant in a conference in Yogyakarta in July 2018 who was looking for advice on how to find a professional publisher. The translation is based on weekly Qur'an instruction that is given after Friday prayers at Al Huda Mosque in Ngabeyan (in Margorejo, in Tempel, in Sleman, in the Special Region of Yogyakarta). Each verse is first translated word for word and then in a coherent form. It is an independent work and not based on any of the Javanese *tafsīr* works that I could examine. Since I could not obtain the other 29 parts, I was not able to include it in this chapter.

9 These are by far not the only Javanese works of translation or *tafsīr*; they are, however, the only ones that were available to me through bookstores, libraries, and the internet. They also seem to be the most well-known and widely used. Manuscripts aside, further works include *al-Huda Tafsir Qur'an Basa Jawi* by Bakri Syahid (1976) as well as the partial *tafsīr* works by Kyai Sholeh Darat, *Fayḍ al-Raḥmān fī Tarjamat Kalām Mālik al-Dayyān* (printed in Singapore around 1892), Moenawar Chalil, *Tafsir Qur'an Hidaajatur-Rahmaan* (*juzʾ* 1, 1958), and Ahmad Djawahir, *Sekar Sari Kidung Rahayu, Sekar Macapat Terjemahanipun Juz Amma* (1992). See Islah Gusmian, "Tafsir al-Qur'an Bahasa Jawa: Peneguhan Identitas, Ideologi, dan Politik", *Ṣuḥuf* 9, no. 1 (2016), 141–168; Mohammad Masrur, "Kyai Soleh Darat, Tafsir Fa'id al-Rahman dan Ra. Kartini", *At-Taqaddum* 4, no. 1 (2012), http://journal.walisongo.ac.id/index.php/attaqaddum/article/view/725.

10 Noor Khamidah, *Studi Analisis Terhadap Terjemah Kuran Jawi Bagus Ngarpah* (BA thesis, Institut Agama Islam Negeri Walisongo, Semarang, 2012), 58–64. The text by Kanjeng Raden Penghulu Tafsir Anom V was not available to me.

11 Noor Khamidah, *Studi Analisis*, 32–64; Nico J.G. Kaptein, *Islam, Colonialism and the Modern Age in the Netherlands East Indies. A Biography of Sayyid ʿUthman (1822–1914)* (Leiden: Brill, 2014), 198–199; Ngarpah, *Kuran Jawi*; Nancy K. Florida, *Javanese Literature in Surakarta Manuscripts* (Ithaca: Cornell Southeast Asia Program Publications, 2012), vol. 3, 248–249; www.facebook.com/notes/shohibul-faroji/kanjeng-raden-penghulu-tafsir-anom-v-ulama-yang-menulis-tafsir-berbahasa-jawa-da/317272161757077/. See also the entry in the catalogue of the Leiden University Library, https://catalogue.leidenuniv.nl/permalink/f/n95gpj/UBL_ALMA21162336040002711, accessed 11 February 2023.

12 Adnan, *Tafsir*, 5; Islah Gusmian, "K.H. Raden Muhammad Adnan (1889–1969 M): Ulama dan Pejuang di Bidang Pendidikan, Politik, dan Agama dari Kauman Surakarta", *Jurnal Lektur Keagamaan* 15, no. 1 (217), 217–232. Both sources seem to assume that

Tafsir al-Qur'an Suci Basa Jawi is an original work but that seems untenable. Even if the assumption that Bagus Ngarpah's and Mohammad Adnan's works are both based on a *tafsīr* by Kanjeng Raden Penghulu Tafsir Anom V, as Noor Khamidah (*Studi Analisis*, 58–64) convincingly argues, were incorrect, Mohammad Adnan's work is in many – although not all – parts identical or very similar to that of Bagus Ngarpah, which was published considerably earlier. It can thus not be entirely original.

13 Maulvi Muhammad Ali, *The Holy Qur-án: Containing the Arabic Text with English Translation and Commentary* (Woking: The "Islamic Review" Office, 1917). The Javanese translation is clearly based on this edition whereas the translations into Dutch and Indonesian were based on subsequent, altered and amended versions.

14 Herman Beck, "The Rupture between the Muhammadiyah and the Ahmadiyya", *Bijdragen tot de Taal-, Land-en Volkenkunde* 161, no. 2/3 (2005), 210–246; Ahmadiyah, "Sejarah Singkat GAI", *GAI Official Sites*, http://ahmadiyah.org/gerakan-ahmadiyah-indonesia/sejarah-singkat-gai/.

15 Ahmad Najib Burhani, "Sectarian Translation of the Qur'an in Indonesia: The Case of the Ahmadiyya", *Al-Jami'ah* 53, no. 2 (2015), 251–282; Moch Nur Ichwan, "Differing Responses to an Ahmadi Translation and Exegesis: 'The Holy Qur'ân' in Egypt and Indonesia", *Archipel* 62 (2001), 158, n. 29.

16 For example, in Q 19:23, Muhammad Ali has "the throes (of childbirth)" for *al-makhāḍ* where the Javanese version has the simpler *nglarani* ("to be in labor"). In Q 19:31, the Arabic *mubārak* ("blessed") is translated with the Arabic loan word *binarkahan*. And in Q 19:33, *ubʿathu ḥayyan* is not rendered as "raised to life", as Muhammad Ali has it, but semantically more closely as "awakened to life" (*kula dipun tangèkaken gesang*).

17 See subsection "Khiḍr, Shuʿayb, and Nimrod: identifying unnamed persons in the Qurʾan".

18 Martin van Bruinessen, "Kitab Kuning: Books in Arabic Script Used in the Pesantren Milieu", *Bijdragen tot de Taal-, Land-en Volkenkunde* 146 (1990), 226–269.

19 Ridhoul Wahidi, "Hierarki Bahasa dalam Tafsir *al-Ibrīz li Maʿrifah Tafsīr al-Qur'ān Al-ʿAzīz* karya K.H. Bisri Musthofa", *Ṣuḥuf* 8, no. 1 (2015), 141–160; van Bruinessen, "Kitab Kuning"; "Sejarah dan Biografi Lengkap KH. Bisri Musthofa", https://web.archive.org/web/20200807002316/http://just4th.blogspot.com/2015/06/sejarah-dan-biografi-lengkap-kh-bisri.html; "KH Bisri Musthofa: Singa Podium Pejuang Kemerdekaan", *NU Online*, www.nu.or.id/post/read/64690/kh-bisri-musthofa-singa-podium-pejuang-kemerdekaan; "Gus Mus Channel", *YouTube*, www.youtube.com/channel/UCZ9uhiZz1FzrMo9fHP8c9uA. All links accessed 11 February 2023.

20 Supriyanto, "Kajian al-Qur'an dalam Tradisi Pesantren: Telaah atas Tafsir *al-Iklîl fî Ma'ânî al-Tanzîl*", *Tsaqafah* 12, no. 2 (2016), 281–298.

21 For more detail on the *gandul* system, see Johanna Pink, "The *kyai*'s Voice and the Arabic Qur'an: Translation, Orality, and Print in Modern Java", *Wacana* 21, no. 3 (2020), 329–359.

22 van Bruinessen, "Kitab kuning", 254.

23 van Bruinessen, "Kitab kuning", 229.

24 Jalāl al-Dīn al-Maḥallī and Jalāl al-Dīn al-Suyūṭī, *Tafsīr al-Jalālayn* (Cairo: Dār al-Ḥadīth, 2001), 398.

25 Bisri Musthofa has her use an imperative, which is never done in Javanese in situations that require politeness because it implies that she is in a position to give her interlocutor orders.

26 Norman Calder, "*Tafsīr* from Ṭabarī to Ibn Kathīr. Problems in the Description of a Genre, Illustrated with Reference to the Story of Abraham", in *Approaches to the Qur'ān*, eds. Abdul-Kader Shareef and G.R. Hawting (London: Taylor & Francis, 1993), 101–140.

27 See, for example, the translations by A. Hassan and Mahmud Yunus that were started in the 1920s and first published in complete versions between the 1930s and 1950s. By the time the Indonesian Ministry of Religions published the first volume of its Qurʾan

translation in 1965, the "literal" approach to Qurʾan translations that relegates exegetical additions, comments, modifications, and alternative interpretations to brackets and footnotes was firmly established. See A. Hassan, *Al-Furqān: Tafsir Qur'an*, 2nd ed. (Jakarta: Universitas al-Azhar, 2010); Mahmud Yunus, *Tafsir Quràn Karim Bahasa Indonesia*, 7th ed. (Jakarta: Pustaka Mahmudiah, 1957); Departemen Agama Republik Indonesia, *Al-Quräan dan Terdjemahnja*, 3 vols. (Jakarta: Jamunu, 1965–1969).

28 On the concepts of continuity and disruption in Qurʾan translation, see Stefan Henning's arguments on China that have been fruitful to my own thoughts on the matter: Stefan Henning, "God's Translator: Qur'an Translation and the Struggle over a Written National Language in 1930s China", *Modern China* 41 (2015), 631–655, at pp. 633–634.

29 It is impossible to provide an exact number because there are slight variations between exegetes concerning the beginning and ending of speech acts. Some exegetes also add to their translation segments of speech that is not explicitly mentioned by the Qurʾan but that others react to.

30 Misbah Mustafa consistently uses the *ngoko* verbal suffix *-aké* instead of *-aken*. In Q 12:63, he has Jacob's sons address their father in *krama* but use the *ngoko* word *pangan* for "food". Such inconsistencies do not occur with any of the other exegetes.

31 See his translation of Q 18:63 where Moses' servant addresses Moses.

32 See Thomas J. Conners and Jozina Vander Klok, "Language Documentation of Colloquial Javanese Varieties", *Actes du congrès annuel de l'Association canadienne de linguistique 2016*, 1–12, at p. 6 where a village in roughly the same region as Bangilan is discussed.

33 The *kitab kuning*, and especially *al-Iklīl*, are not unfailingly consistent in their use of register. For example, *al-Iklīl* has Joseph's brothers address Joseph in *ngoko* throughout, except in Q 12:88 where they address him as the mighty ruler of Egypt. This is not the only verse where they consider him the vizier of Egypt and are ignorant of the fact that he is their brother, but it is the only instance in which *al-Iklīl* uses *krama*.

34 Only in Q 12:81 and 12:85 does *al-Iklīl* slip into *ngoko*. The first one of those contains a son's fictional words to his father, presented to his brothers, and in the second verse, it is not entirely clear who is speaking. These can be considered minor lapses; throughout the extensive amount of dialogue in the surah, Misbah Mustafa uses *krama* in all the other instances in which Jacob is addressed by his sons and other descendants. The other exegetes do so without exception.

35 Only *al-Ibrīz* has the angel talk to Mary in *ngoko* but has angels use *krama* towards Abraham, Sara, and Lot. Bagus Ngarpah has the angels use *ngoko* towards Sara (Q 11:73), but not towards Abraham; this is one of the few instances in which Adnan's choice of register differs from his.

36 More will be said on that common trope subsequently. See Younus Y. Mirza, "Ibn Taymiyya as Exegete. Moses' Father-in-Law and the Messengers in *Sūrat Yā Sīn*", *Journal of Qur'anic Studies* 19, no. 1 (2017): 39–71.

37 With the exception of a very brief opening statement.

38 Benedict R. O'G. Anderson, "*Sembah-Sumpah*: The Politics of Language and Javanese Culture", in id., *Language and Power. Exploring Political Cultures in Indonesia* (Jakarta: Equinox, 2006), 200–237.

39 This is true for Q 12:11, where *al-Ibrīz* adds a non-Qurʾanic line that Joseph says to his brothers in *krama*, and for 12:91, 7:142, and 7:150.

40 Other examples for a shift in attitude expressed through choice of register are the sorcerers' shift to *ngoko* towards Pharao after having embraced Moses' religion in *al-Ibrīz* (Q 7:125–126, 26:50–51) and the Egyptians' use of *krama* towards Moses after they have been subjected to divine punishment and ask Moses to pray for them (Q 7:134) in the translations by Bagus Ngarpah, Adnan, and the Ahmadiyya.

41 This is true for Q 12:32, 12:36, 12:46, and 28:19.

42 The one exception is Q 26:36–37.

43 This is true for Q 7:104–105, 7:111–113, 7:121–122, 7:127, 7:129, 26:36–37, 26:41, and 26:47–48.

44 This is true for Q 26:16–17, 26:20–22, 26:24, 26:26, 26:30, and 26:47–48.
45 Q 7:134; Bagus Ngarpah, Adnan, and the Ahmadiyya choose *krama* here, the other two exegetes *ngoko*. There is also a slight inconsistency in how Moses' people address him. In Q 7:129 and 7:138, everyone but Misbah Mustafa has them use *krama*; in Q 26:61, the Ahmadiyya translators switch to *ngoko*. This is probably because in Q 26:61, it is not the people of Israel but the "companions (*aṣḥāb*) of Moses" who are speaking; these might be understood to be high-ranking companions, rather than the entire people.
46 Translation by the author.
47 In Bisri Musthofa's and Misbah Mustafa's translations, the past tense is not indicated. It only becomes clear from context or commentary that the phrase cannot be read in the present tense. In Bisri Musthofa's translation, it would be impossible to tell without reading the excursus labelled *qiṣṣa*.
48 Abū ʿAbdallāh Muḥammad b. Aḥmad b. Abī Bakr al-Qurṭubī, *Al-Jāmiʿ li-aḥkām al-Qurʾān* (Beirut: Al-Risāla, 2006), 16: 172–173.
49 See, for example, Muḥammad b. ʿAlī b. Muḥammad al-Shawkānī, *Fatḥ al-Qadīr* (al-Manṣūra: Dār al-Wafāʾ, 1994), 4: 187.
50 Other examples are Q 7:109–110 where the exegetes do not agree on whether Pharaoh and his Counsellors are speaking and whom they are addressing, and Q 27:24–26 where it is unclear where the hoopoe's speech ends. There is also disagreement over Q 26:88–91. The exegetes agree that Abraham's prayer (in *krama*) ends at some point, at which they return to *ngoko*. Bisri Musthofa makes that transition in Q 12:92, Bagus Ngarpah in 12:88, and the others in 12:90. In Q 52–53, it is entirely not clear who is speaking: Joseph, God or possibly Zulaykhāʾ? Only Bagus Ngarpah uses *krama*, indicating that he might prefer the third option.
51 This is the case, for example, in those situations where a prophet addresses a group of people and it is unclear whether that group contains a person deserving of particular respect, such as Pharaoh or Abraham's father. See Q 26:70–82, 28:37, 37:89, 37:95–96.
52 Al-Maḥallī and al-Suyūṭī, *Tafsīr al-Jalālayn*, 390.
53 Ali, *The Holy Qur-án*, 602, n. 1515.
54 Ali, *The Holy Qur-án*, 121, n. 345.
55 Mirza, "Ibn Taymiyya as Exegete".
56 al-Maḥallī and al-Suyūṭī, *Tafsīr al-Jalālayn*, 510.
57 Ali, *The Holy Qur-án*, 763, n. 1878.
58 Ali, *Qur'an Suci Jarwa Jawi*, trans. Djajasugita and M. Mufti Sharif, 1050, n. 1878.
59 The 1951 edition has a footnote on the old man from Midian that says "This was Jethro or Shuʿayb" but also retains the part of the original note that calls the man Jethro, giving the impression that the names are interchangeable. See Maulana Muhammad Ali, *Translation of the Holy Quran with Short Notes and Introduction* (Lahore: Ahmadiyyah Anjuman Ishaat-i-Islam, 1951), 389, n. 2. As for the Urdu version, I am deeply grateful to Simon Fuchs for having read the relevant footnote for me. See Muḥammad ʿAlī, *Bayān al-Qurʾān yaʿnī Urdū tarjamah al-Qurʾān* (Lahore: Aḥmadiyya Anjuman Ishāʿat-e Islām, 1401 H. =1980), 1038, n. 2509.
60 Regarding the importance of gender notions for understanding *tafsīr*, and not just vice versa, see Karen Bauer, *Gender Hierarchy in the Qur'ān: Medieval Interpretations, Modern Responses* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2015).
61 Kristian Petersen, *Interpreting Islam in China: Pilgrimage, Scripture, and Language in the Han Kitab* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2018), 3. See also Samuli Schielke and Liza Debevec, "Introduction", in *Ordinary Lives and Grand Schemes: An Anthropology of Everyday Religion*, eds. Samuli Schielke and Liza Debevec, EASA Series 18 (New York: Berghahn Books, 2012), 1–16.

6 Translating the Qur'an into Sundanese

A translator's personal experiences

Jajang A. Rohmana

Introduction

Some people consider translation a simple task: it is a translator's job to transfer a sentence from one language into another[1] by choosing vocabulary that conveys the meaning as closely as possible. From a linguist's viewpoint, however, creating a perfect translation is impossible because the translator does not just have to transfer the meaning of a sentence into the target language; the process also necessarily involves conveying often complex psychological, linguistic, social and cultural perspectives from the source language into the target language.[2] Works of translation are even more complicated when they deal with holy books, and this is especially true of the Qurʾan, as it is considered by believers the word of God. Based on their belief in the holiness of the Qurʾan, some twentieth-century Muslim scholars, such as the Egyptian scholar Muḥammad Rashīd Riḍā (1865–1936), declared that translating the Qurʾan is impermissible.[3] Prior to the twentieth century, translation practices were different, usually involving a format in which the Arabic text of the Qurʾan was accompanied by interlinear "commentary" in the target language rather than being translation as we define it today, which meant that there was not such wide-scale opposition to translation of the holy text in earlier times. Generally, premodern scholars were only opposed to reciting Qurʾan translations in prayer, not to the actual practice of translating the Qurʾan in general.

The impact of the controversy over Qurʾan translation can be seen at work in Indonesia in, for example, the fatwa against Qurʾan translation issued by the colonial official Sayyid 'Uthmān bin 'Aqīl bin Yaḥyā (1822–1914);[4] the opposition of Priangan ulama to Ahmad Sanusi's (1888–1950) *Tamsjijjatoel Moeslimin* ("Muslims' Journey"), published in Sukabumi, which featured both Qurʾan translation and transliteration into Latin script;[5] the polemical reaction to the poetic translation of the Qurʾan by H.B. Jassin in the 1970s;[6] and, more recently, in the blasphemy charges brought in 2017 against the former Governor of Jakarta, Basuki Tjahaja Purnama, popularly known by his Chinese nickname "Ahok".[7]

In the case of last of these examples, Ahok was considered guilty of "instigating" the politicization of the translation of Q 5:51 ("O ye who believe! Take not the Jews and the Christians for your *awliyā'*") ahead of the gubernatorial elections in 2017. As a member of the Christian minority in Indonesia, he complained

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that Muslims are often lied to by politicians on the basis of their interpretation of *awliyāʾ* as "leaders" in Q 5:51, a translation which, he argued, led Indonesian Muslims to understand this verse as being a prohibition against electing Christians to political office. Ahok's statement that the verse had been misinterpreted for political gain elicited protests from Islamist groups that led to anti-Ahok rallies in Jakarta. In the end, Ahok was detained and sentenced to almost three years in prison. The controversy surrounding Q 5:51 thus combined political issues with animosity towards minorities and racism against the backdrop of the decline of democracy in Indonesia.[8]

These cases demonstrate how reader responses to translations of the Qurʾan are linked to their social and political context. Translation, as a practice that involves ethical aspects, has to concern itself with semantic considerations, aesthetic accountability, ideology and politics.[9] Therefore, translations of scripture not only need to pay attention to language structure, but also to the context in which the translation is undertaken. The questions that usually arise are: Why is the scripture being translated? Who is the translator? For whom is the translation intended? How is the translation process undertaken?[10]

A recent translation that strives to honor the ethical and doctrinal requirements of the translation process is *Terjemahan Al-Qur'an Bahasa Sunda* ("The Sundanese Qurʾan Translation"), published in 2020 by the Research and Development Center for Literature, Religious Heritage and Organization Management (LKKMO, henceforth referred to as the Research and Development Center for Literature), which is part of the Research and Development Agency, which, in turn, is under the supervision of the Ministry of Religious Affairs. This translation is one of a series of Qurʾan translation projects into regional Indonesian languages undertaken by the Research and Development Center for Literature. Prior to the publication of *Terjemahan Al-Qur'an Bahasa Sunda*, the Center had previously published fifteen Qurʾan translations into regional languages such as Makassar, Kaili and Sasak (in 2012); Minang, Kanayatn Dayak and Banyumas (in 2015); Angkola Batak, Toraja and Bolaang Mongondow (in 2016); Balinese, Ambonese-Malays and Banjar (in 2017); and Acehnese, Madura and Bugis (in 2018).[11]

This chapter discusses the experiences of the translators who were involved in the 2018–2019 Sundanese Qurʾan translation project, which took almost two years from start to finish. The final draft of the translation was launched at the end of 2019 in Jakarta and the work was then officially published in 2020. The project was carried out by a group of scholars from the Ushuluddin Faculty of the State Islamic University (UIN), Sunan Gunung Djati in Bandung (abbreviated as UIN Bandung) and Padjadjaran University (abbreviated as Unpad). Drawing on my experiences as a member of the translation team, I will describe the creative processes behind the project, along with the various issues that came up during the course of the translation work. I will first provide an overview of the history and development of Sundanese Qurʾan translations in West Java, to provide general background, and then move on to discuss the various phases of the 2018–2019 *Terjemahan Al-Qur'an Bahasa Sunda* project itself: its translation guidelines, the negotiation of differences between the Arabic Qurʾan and the Sundanese language, and issues of

government control regarding the Muslim majority and state ideology. I will conclude by addressing the ways that these various factors impacted on the academic, scholarly agenda of the individual translators during the course of the project.

This chapter is based in my efforts to record discussions that took place throughout the course of the project. It shows the ways in which a government-funded Qurʾan translation has to balance academic priorities against non-academic ones: the translation team, on the one hand, aims to be objective in dealing with the texts, but, on the other hand, they are also confronted with issues related to theology, psychology, ethics, ideology, ethnicity, bureaucracy, budget and politics. Although the work of translators, academically speaking, should be free from the constraints of ethnicity, religion and politics, it is in fact often framed by theological and anthropological questions: Who has the authority to translate the Qurʾan into Sundanese? How important is it that the translators be native speakers of the target language? Can insiders be neutral and objective in undertaking and assessing their own translations? How do insiders' identities influence their research into translations?

The issue of "insiders" and "outsiders" is frequently discussed by scholars who study religious traditions. The issue of the religious identity of scholars who work in the study of religion, and the relationship of this identity with academic neutrality and objectivity – what has been termed "the insider/outsider debate" – has been an ongoing arena of contestation for some time.[12] There is a tendency to consider insiders as being biased, prone to taking a defensive stance, and liable to cover up negative aspects of the religion they study because of their emotional attachment. In contrast, the outsider is often considered to be objective and unbiased. In this case of this particular Sundanese translation, a variety of religious outsiders studied, analyzed and freely provided judgment on, and criticism of, the translation: there was no conflict of interest with their involvement in the project.

As mentioned, this chapter traces my own experiences as someone who was involved in the translation project.[13] I emphasize my position as an insider whose perspective on the process of Qurʾan translation is shaped by the cultural, social, political and religious experiences that influence how I, and the other translators on the team, interpret the traditions. These perspectives may differ considerably from an outsider's perspective,[14] but I argue that insiders do not always have to be subjective and biased. As part of the position I take as an insider, I try to keep a distance from political influences. There is a standard of scholarship that I must fight for when involved in any project. In other words, I try to use objective scholarly arguments in spite of my insider status.

A number of scholars have studied Qurʾan translation in Indonesia. Moch. Nur Ichwan, for instance, has investigated the political interests that inform the official translations published by the Indonesian government, deducing these by analyzing revisions of the translations.[15] Likewise, Johanna Pink has examined the theological interests that inform state translations in Indonesia.[16] Other scholars, such as M. Thalib of the Indonesian Mujahidin Council (MMI), have analyzed various errors in the 1990 state translation of the Qurʾan[17] and reviewed the responses of various ulama to this translation.[18] Ichwan has also written on the reasons that translation of the Qurʾan in Indonesia became an important issue of debate among Egyptian

scholars. Furthermore, a number of translations published by both the Lahore and Qadiani Ahmadiyya community have been analyzed by Ahmad Najib Burhani.[19] Of equal interest are poetic translations of the Qurʾan in Indonesia, which have been studied by various scholars.[20]

As can be seen from the previous, studies on Qurʾan translation in Indonesia are mainly limited to discussion of linguistic, theological and political issues. There are not many scholars who examine Qurʾan translations from the perspective of the translator's experience as an insider in the translation project. This chapter therefore reconstructs the *Terjemahan Al-Qur'an Bahasa Sunda* project, a project funded and overseen by the government, and examines the process, as well as the conflicts of interest, behind the production of this translation of the Qurʾan into Sundanese.

The translation of the Qurʾan into Sundanese

This section will trace the history of Sundanese Qurʾan translation in West Java and Banten on the basis that it is important to show the historical roots of the Sundanese people's attempts to negotiate between their languages and the Arabic Qurʾan, and the development of translation approaches over time. I will not address Qurʾanic commentaries in Sundanese in this chapter because their form and characteristics are very different from those of Qurʾan translations: Sundanese commentaries on the Qurʾan generally contain explanations and long comments, in contrast to the translations, which simply translate the Arabic Qurʾan word for word.[21]

Many translations of the Qurʾan have been produced and published in Indonesia. Qurʾan translations were already being authored during the first stages of Islamization, as a means by which the local population could become acquainted with Islam and Islamic tenets. Anthony Johns considers the process of vernacularization of the Qurʾan from Arabic into regional languages to be an indication of the strengthening of the influence of Islam in many regions in Indonesia.[22] Further to this, Peter Riddell has published on the development of the process of Qurʾan translation in Indonesia, dividing it into three main periods: the period between c. 1500 and the 1920s, the decades from the 1920s to the 1960s and the mid-1960s until today.[23]

I will employ a slightly different periodization to Riddell's when exploring Sundanese Qurʾan translations in West Java. According to this periodization, the first important stage of Sundanese Qurʾan translation took place between the seventeenth until the nineteenth century, during which time Arabic words made their way into ancient Sundanese manuscripts, manuscripts of the Qurʾan were produced locally, and the first manuscripts of the Qurʾan with Javanese translations in *pegon* (Arabic) script emerged in West Java. Javanese has been used by Sundanese people attending *pesantren*s (Islamic learning institutions under the leadership of ulama or *kiai*) since the Mataram Kingdom ruled West Java in the seventeenth century. The second stage covers the decades between the 1900s and 1930s, when Sundanese Qurʾan translations in *pegon* script appeared at many *pesantren*s in Priangan. During this time the tradition of *ngalogat* emerged at Sundanese *pesantren*s, a method

that used Sundanese interlinear translation. There were many objections from the ulama in Priangan to the translation of the Qurʾan and its transliteration into a non-Arabic script in this period. The third stage encompasses the time span from the 1930s to the present day and is characterized by the publication of an increasing number of translations in Latin script.

The first period, c. 1600s–1900s

In this period, Arabic words appear in Sundanese manuscripts for the first time. An example of this can be seen in the oldest manuscripts of *the Story of Priangan* ("Carita Parahiyangan") and the story of a Sundanese ascetic, *Sri Ajnyana*, both of which were produced in the sixteenth century. *The Story of Priangan* mentions at least four Arabic words, namely "world" (*duniya*), "intention" (*niyyah*), "Islam" (*selam*) and "cleansing after defecation" (*tinja*).[24] Meanwhile, the story of *Sri Ajnyana* mentions *Meukah*, which probably refers to the holy city of Mecca.[25] In addition, this period is characterized by the emergence of Malay and Javanese manuscripts with translations of, and commentaries on, the Qurʾan. These were written on traditional paper (*dluwang* or *saéh*), European paper and other materials in Javanese *pegon* script. So far, four Qurʾan manuscripts from eighteenth-century Banten have been found that include Malay and Javanese translations. Three of these manuscripts are stored in the National Library (A 51; A 54; W. 277), and the other is stored at Masjid Agung Banten.[26] According to Ekadjati and Darsa, there are 245 Islamic manuscripts, including thirteen Qurʾan manuscripts and six Qurʾan translations and commentaries, in the possession of museums in West Java.[27] There are also other texts in Islamic fields of knowledge, such as Islamic jurisprudence (*fiqh*), Sufi orders (*ṭarīqāt*), hagiography (*manāqib*) and prayers.[28] One manuscript with Qurʾan translations and commentaries is stored at the Museum of Cangkuang in Garut.[29]

The second period, c. 1900s–1930s

During this period there was increasing use of Qurʾan translations in Sundanese *pegon* script. At first, these translations did not use different registers, as can be seen in their use of the pronoun *aing* (English: I; Indonesian: *aku*) to refer to God (as the subject of the sentence). The pronoun *aing* later came to be regarded as a coarse word that should not be used to refer to God and was replaced by the pronoun *kami* or *kaula*. This change in usage is significant because it shows that the authors of the earlier manuscripts had not yet been influenced by standard Sundanese, which has different registers and which was generally imposed upon them by the Javanese Kingdom of Mataram and the Dutch colonial government.[30] These early manuscripts were initially disseminated through handwritten copies, and were later published in printed form as lithographs. The use of Latin script in Qurʾan commentaries also began to take root during at this time, but the practice raised controversy among the ulama in Priangan, the core region of Sundanese Islamic culture in West Java. Ahmad Sanusi's *Tamsjijjatoel Moeslimin*, for instance, was criticized

by some because of his use of Latin script. Ahmad Sanusi successfully responded to the ulama's objections and continued to publish his works in Latin script. However, this demonstrates that the translation of the Qurʾan and its transliteration into non-Arabic languages and Latin scripts had not been entirely accepted at the time. Critics claimed that these languages and scripts could not fully accommodate the meaning of the Qurʾan and would impair the Qurʾan's sanctity.[31]

The works of Hasan Mustapa and Ahmad Sanusi were published in this second period of Sundanese Qurʾan translation. In the 1920s, Hasan Mustapa published his translation and a brief Qurʾanic commentary entitled *Qur'anul Adhimi* ("The Glorious Qurʾan"), for which he chose 105 verses that he considered especially meaningful for Sundanese people.[32] Between 1900 and 1902, he also composed more than 10,000 verses of Sundanese poetry in the form of metrical verse (*dangding*), which included a poetic translation of the Qurʾan. The poetic works of Hasan Mustapa are similar to those of Hamza al-Fanṣūrī (c. 1600) and his Malay *syair* (Arabic: *shiʿr*). Hamzah arranged his *syair* in the form of a quatrain, and in his poetry he rendered many quotes from the Qurʾan into Malay. Meanwhile, Hasan Mustapa integrated Qurʾanic verses into his Sundanese metrical verses.[33]

Ahmad Sanusi was one of the three most prominent ulama of this period, a prolific Sundanese writer as well as an authority in Qurʾan translation and commentary.[34] Ahmad Sanusi's Qurʾan translation takes the form of an interlinear word-for-word translation, which makes his work a good example of the previously mentioned *ngalogat* tradition.[35] Ahmad Sanusi used *ngalogat*, for instance, in his *Rauḍat al-ʿirfān*. The composition of this work involved a translation team consisting of his students (*santri*s) who recorded Ahmad Sanusi's teachings on Qurʾanic exegesis. Ahmad Sanusi placed his Sundanese translation beneath the main text of the Arabic Qurʾan (*jenggotan*), aiming to ensure by doing so that the *santri*s who attended *pesantren* understood the structure of the Qurʾanic text. Meanwhile, we can find Ahmad Sanusi's Qurʾanic commentary placed at the margins of the page. Hence, Ahmad Sanusi's word-for-word translation of the Qurʾan follows the structure of the main text of the Arabic Qurʾan.[36]

Between 1934 and 1937, Ahmad Sanusi became involved in polemic arguments with some Indonesian ulama over the issue of Qurʾan translation after he published a controversial Malay translation of the Qurʾan written in Latin script called *Tamsjijjatoel Moeslimin*. Although Ahmad Sanusi was considered a translator by many others, he himself insisted that what he did was not translation, and instead described his works as "brief Qurʾanic commentaries" since the term "Qurʾan translation" was still avoided at that time. Many scholars at the time chose to call their works Qurʾanic commentaries, even though they were actually, for all intents and purposes, translations.[37]

In addition, this period was marked by the rise of Sundanese printed books, supported by the emergence of several publishing houses dedicated to printing books on religious issues pioneered by figures such as R.H. Moehamad Moesa (1822–1886). Moesa, who was the *Penghulu* of Limbangan, the Dutch government official responsible for Islamic affairs, put printing technology into use in order to publish Sundanese books and translations of the Qurʾan. Other members

of the Sundanese elite, or *ménak*, then joined in Moesa's efforts.[38] (Moesa was a close friend of K.F. Holle (1829–1896), a Dutch colonial advisor, and in addition to writing Sundanese books, allegedly also translated the Qurʾan from Dutch into Sundanese.)[39]

The third period, c. 1930s–present day

Since the 1930s, Qurʾan translation into Sundanese has played an important role in the development of Qurʾanic studies in West Java. This development is related to a shift in Egyptian scholars' attitudes towards Qurʾan translation in the 1930s. In contrast to earlier attitudes, many Egyptian scholars now argued that translating the Qurʾan was not forbidden because it was a part of understanding, commenting on and interpreting the Qurʾan (*tafsīr*).[40] The idea of Islamic reform, which spread throughout Indonesia in the early twentieth century, was another factor that increased scholarly interest in the Qurʾan, in terms of Qurʾan commentary as well as translation. Previously, Qurʾanic studies had been considered less important than other fields of Islamic knowledge at *pesantren*, the traditional centers of Islamic learning; it was not at the core of the curriculum of a *pesantren*-educated scholar. This meant that the translation and interpretation of the Qurʾan were generally conducted not by traditional *santris* but by scholars who were influenced by the ideas of Islamic reform.[41]

Translation into Sundanese in this period was, generally, increasingly dominated by printed books that used Latin script and moved from the old Sundanese spelling system to what is now called the Enhanced Spelling System (Indonesian: *Ejaan Yang Disempurnakan*, abbreviated EYD) which was officially introduced in 1972, and debates and polemics about the use of Latin script to write Qurʾanic verses slowly subsided. The use of the Sundanese language in Qurʾan translation was also influenced by the standardization of Sundanese grammar rules, such as the use of registers.[42]

The various translators of the Qurʾan in this period had diverse backgrounds. Some worked individually, while others worked as a team formed by either private institutions or the Indonesian government. (The following Sundanese scholars translated the Qurʾan individually: Muhammad Kurdi, R.A.A. Wiranatakoesoema, K.H. Qamaruddin Shaleh, M. Syarief Sukandi, K.H. Abdulchalim, R. Hidayat Suryalaga, Enas Mabarti, Muhammad Romli, M. Djawad Dahlan, Miftahurrahman, Anwar Huda and Mariyah Maryati Sastrawijaya.) Additionally, there were teams who translated the Qurʾan on the initiative of institutions, resulting in works such as *Al-Amin* (translated by K.H. Qamaruddin Shaleh, H.A.A. Dahlan and Yus Rusamsi and published in 1971); *Tarjamah Surah Yasin* (Mahyudin Syaf and Hasan Basri, 1986); *Kitab Suci Al-Qur'an Tarjamah Sunda* (1998, published by the Indonesian Ahmadiyya Community, JAI); and *Tarjamah Al-Qur'an Basa Sunda* (1974) and *Al-Qur'an Miwah Tarjamahna dina Basa Sunda* (2002), both from the West Java government and the Regional Office of the Ministry of Religious Affairs in West Java.[43] The last translation in this list is the subject of this chapter and will be discussed in more detail in the following.

Since the 1930s, Sundanese Qurʾan translation has generally been dominated by exegetical (*tafsīriyya*) rather than literal (*ḥarfiyya*) translation or, rather, by communicative translation rather than semantic translation. This typology was first proposed by Abdul-Raof and differentiates between a focus on the target language (communicative) and on the source language (semantic). Semantic translation, for instance, can be found in Ahmad Sanusi's interlinear, word-for-word translation in *Rauḍat al-ʿirfān*, which generally tends to be guided by the structure of the Arabic Qurʾan rather than Sundanese syntax. Conversely, most Sundanese Qurʾan translations follow the communicative translation method.[44]

There is no single format that Sundanese Qurʾan translations conform to. For example, Ahmad Sanusi used the interlinear method, while Hasan Mustapa opted for a poetic translation. Contemporary Sundanese translations use a variety of styles, such as Sundanese metrical verses (*dangding* and *pupujian* or *nadoman*), parentheses, footnotes, translations written in the form of a dictionary and Latin transliteration. All these forms generally split the text into two columns, presenting the Arabic text and its translation side by side. A number of Sundanese Qurʾan translations are based on Indonesian Qurʾan translations, while several only comprise one *juzʾ* or one *sūra* and, finally, some Sundanese Qurʾanic commentaries integrate a translation into their commentary. These formats will all be explained briefly here.

The first translation in the form of *dangding, Soerat Al-Baqarah* (1949), was written by R.A.A. Wiranatakoesoema (1888–1965) with the assistance of R.A.A. Soeriamihardja.[45] *Dangding* (Javanese: *geguritan*) is a type of Sundanese poem which is heavily influenced by Javanese literary traditions and composed in metrical verses according to what is known as pupuh rules. This is apparent in its number of cantos (*larik*), *guru lagu* (the scheme of end vowels in each stanza) and *guru wilangan* (the number of syllables). This *dangding* style approach to translation of the Qurʾan was later adopted by R. Hidayat Suryalaga (1941–2011) who wrote *Nur Hidayah: Saritilawah Basa Sunda Al-Qur'an 30 Juz Wìnangan Pupuh* (1980).[46]

Dangding is different from another Sundanese poetic form known as *pupujian* or *nadoman* (Javanese: *syi'iran*, Malay: *syair*), which is similar to the Malay poetic form of *syair* that arranges the verses in the form of a quatrain (*rubāʿī* or *rubāʿiyyāt*). *Pupujian* were usually sung at the mosque while people were waiting for the morning and evening prayer to start. Sundanese Qurʾan translations in the form of *pupujian* or *nadoman* were written by R. Hidayat Suryalaga in his *Nadoman Nurul Hikmah* (2001) as well as by Enas Mabarti in his Sundanese translation of several short *sūra*s (1974) and by Yus Rusyana (1970).[47]

Many Sundanese Qurʾan translations use parentheses and footnotes in order to make their translations more understandable, such as Muhammad Kurdi's *Al-Qur'an Sundawiyah* (1927), published by TB. Sitti Syamsiah Solo; Muhammad Romli's *Qoeran Tardjamah Soenda* (1950s);[48] *Alkitabul Mubin* (1974) by K.H. Qamaruddin Shaleh (1912–1977); *Al-Amin: Al-Qur'an Tarjamah Sunda* (1971) by H.A.A. Dahlan and Yus Rusamsi; *Kitab Suci Al-Qur'an Tarjamah Sunda* (1998)[49] by the committee of Sundanese Qurʾan translation of the Indonesian Ahmadiyya community; *Tarjamah Al-Qur'an Bahasa Sunda* (1974) and *Al-Qur'an Miwah*

Tarjamahna dina Basa Sunda (2002), published by the West Java government and the Regional Office of the Ministry of Religious Affairs in West Java; M. Djawad Dahlan's *Al-Munir: Al-Qur'an Tarjamah Basa Sunda* (2005);[50] Miftahurrahman's *Al-Huda* (2009); and two works by Mariyah Maryati: *Al-Hikmah: Tarjamah Al-Qur'an Basa Sunda Juz Ka-1* (2009) and *Anugerah Al-Qur'anul-Karim Tarjamah Basa Sunda Juz 1–30* (2011).[51]

Another format followed by Sundanese Qurʾan translations, is a word-for-word, "dictionary" format that splits the text into two columns. Anwar Huda's *Qomus Al-Qur'an Basa Sunda* (1995) is a good example of this.[52] In addition, some Sundanese translators have also added the Latin transliteration of the Arabic Qurʾan to their translations, as in the case of M. Syarief Sukandi's *Terjemah Al-Qur'an sareng Laten* (1993) and Miftahurrahman's *Al-Huda: Al-Qur'an Tarjamah ku Basa Sunda (Transliterasi) 30 Juz* (2009).[53]

A number of Sundanese Qurʾan translations also draw on the government translation into Indonesian. These include *Tarjamah Al-Qur'an Bahasa Sunda*, the translation published by the West Java government and the Regional Office of the Ministry of Religious Affairs in West Java (1974–1979), and *Al-Qur'an Miwah Tarjamahna dina Basa Sunda*, published by the Institution of Tilawatil Qurʾan Development (LPTQ) of West Java in cooperation with Handam Citamatra Studio (2002).[54] These works were based on *Al-Qur'an dan Terjemahnya*, the state translation of the Qurʾan into Indonesian, both the Mukti Ali edition (1974) and the Saudi edition (1990).[55] There are also Mariyah Maryati's *Al-Hikmah* (2009) and *Anugerah Al-Qur'anul-Karim* (2011) which are based on the Saudi edition (1990).

Several Sundanese translations translate only one *juzʾ* or one *sūra*, such as K.H. Qamaruddin Shaleh's *Tardjamah Djuz 'Amma Basa Sunda* (1965),[56] *Muqaddam Al-Qur'an Tardjamah Sunda, Juz 1* (1969),[57] and Mahyuddin Syaf and Hasan Basri's *Tarjamah Surah Yasin* (1986).

Furthermore, Sundanese Qurʾan translation cannot be separated from the development of Sundanese *tafsīr* works that integrated translation and commentary, such as *Ghajatoel Bajan* (1928) by M. Anwar Sanuci, *Tafsier Soerat Al-Ma'oen* (1930) by K.H. Abdulchalim, *Nurul-Bajan* (1960) by Muhammad Romli and H.N.S. Midjaja, *Ayat Suci Lenyepaneun* (1984) by Moh. E. Hasim and *Al-Razi* (2011) by Uu Suhendar.

As can be clearly seen from the previous, Sundanese Qurʾan translation activities from the pre-independence period to the present day are diverse with regard to form and method. This pertains to the choice of script (*pegon* or Latin), to the sources they use, the type of translation (literal or exegetic, semantic or communicative), the translation methods (such as poetry, prose, word-for-word or the dictionary method), the translators (individual, committee and/or official institution) and the size of the translation (full or partial translation or integration into a Qurʾanic commentary). The diversity of Qurʾan translations into Sundanese parallels the diverse backgrounds of the translators in terms of the educational, geographical, social and cultural situations that influence their translations in various ways.

Some translations such as H.A.A. Dahlan and Yus Rusamsi's *Al-Amin: Al-Qur'an Tarjamah Sunda* and M. Djawad Dahlan's *Al-Munir: Al-Qur'an Tarjamah*

Basa Sunda are considered particularly reliable and are often used by Sundanese Muslims in their daily activities, as well as by other Sundanese translators and exegetes. "Official" translations have tended not to be used so much, mainly because they have been produced in limited print runs that are not generally for sale: it is difficult to get these translations on the open market. The government of West Java has recently taken steps to remedy this situation by publishing several official translations into Sundanese, with the intention of controlling the publication of Qurʾan translations in the provinces. One of these translations, *Terjemahan Al-Qur'an Bahasa Sunda*, was produced between 2018 and 2019. I joined this project, which will be discussed in the next section, as a member of the team of translators.

Terjemahan Al-Qur'an Bahasa Sunda: the 2018–2019 Sundanese Qurʾan translation government project

This section describes the process through which the team that conducted the government translation of the Qurʾan into Sundanese during the years of 2018 and 2019 was formed. I will focus on the establishment of the translation team, the preparation of translation guidelines and the timeline of the translation project. By explaining the production process of this Qurʾan translation, I will shed light on the concrete measures that were taken and decisions that were made before the text was published and made available to Sundanese society. I was directly involved in all phases of the project from the beginning until the end.

The formation of the team of translators

The Sundanese Qurʾan translation project was initiated by the Research and Development Center for Literature, which is under the remit of the Ministry of Religious Affairs and is currently headed by Muhammad Zain. In accordance with government instructions concerning regional translation projects, the title of the project, *Terjemahan Al-Qur'an Bahasa Sunda*, is in Indonesian rather than the Sundanese *Tarjamah Al-Qur'an Basa Sunda*, which might have been expected of a translation into the Sundanese language.

Since 2011, the Research and Development Center for Literature has undertaken projects to translate the Qurʾan into several Indonesian regional languages. According to Muhammad Zain, this endeavor is important not only to enrich the regional heritage of Qurʾan translations but also to expand and facilitate knowledge about the Qurʾan for speakers of regional languages who are less familiar with the national language, Bahasa Indonesia. The translation projects thus serve the dual aim of both preserving regional languages and facilitating the application of Qurʾanic teachings in ordinary Muslims' daily lives.[58]

The Research and Development Center for Literature appointed a leader for the translation team as the first step of the project. The scholar who was appointed to head the team of translators was Rosihon Anwar, the dean of the Ushuluddin (Theology) Faculty at UIN Bandung. Professor Rosihon Anwar's main specialization is Qurʾanic studies, which is why he was chosen to be the chairperson of the

group. He deployed the administrative staff at the Ushuluddin Faculty to arrange the scheduling of the translation process, plan meetings and handle other technical tasks. Professor Rosihon Anwar was also responsible for assembling the rest of the translation team. In this capacity, he invited me and several other scholars to join the project.

All members of the translation team were Sundanese Muslims who are able to speak, read and write in Sundanese, and two main specializations were represented: Qurʾanic studies and the Sundanese language. The Qurʾanic studies scholars were mainly lecturers in Qurʾanic studies at UIN Bandung. Their group was led by Professor Rosihon Anwar, who has also worked as a translator. He was joined by Wawan Hernawan, Dadan Rusmana, M. Solahudin, Dadang Darmawan, Izzah Faizah Siti Rusydati Khaerani and myself. Each member of the group translated four or five sections (*juzʾ*) of the Qurʾan. The linguistics team was appointed by Professor Rosihon Anwar and consisted of me, Syarif Hidayat, Gugun Gunardi and Mamat Ruhimat, all of whom (with the exception of myself) were on the staff of the Faculty of Arts and Humanities at Padjadjaran University (Unpad). Each linguist read and corrected about ten sections (*juzʾ*) once they had been translated by the Qurʾanic scholars' team.

Both of these groups were important for the success of this translation project. Qurʾan translation does not only require scholars who are experts in understanding Arabic, the source language, but also needs experts in the target language. In the case of this project, the Qurʾanic studies scholars working on the translation have mastered both Arabic and Qurʾanic studies. They are able to speak, read and write both in Arabic and Sundanese but have no specific skills in Sundanese language and literature. The members of the linguistics team, conversely, are able to read the Arabic Qurʾan but lack refined expertise in Arabic linguistics and Qurʾanic exegesis (with the exception of Syarif Hidayat, who is a professor in Arabic linguistics). However, they have mastered the Sundanese language and its literature and are therefore knowledgeable on Sundanese idiomatic expressions, their origins and connotations. The involvement of both Qurʾanic studies scholars and scholars of Sundanese linguistics in the project, with their different academic backgrounds, is very important in bridging the gap between the Arabic and Sundanese languages and conveying the meaning of the Arabic text as precisely as possible.

Social media, especially a group chat on WhatsApp, was an essential part of the project. The use of social media was important in helping to facilitate coordination, organize programs, set deadlines for the different phases of the translation process, supervise the use of Sundanese dictionaries and formulate translator guidelines. It also served as a forum in which to discuss certain issues, especially controversies related to the broader context of translations into regional languages, such as the question of whether the term *Islam Nusantara*, or "Islam of the Indonesian Archipelago", is appropriate to use to describe the religious identity of Indonesian Islam. Another example would be the discussion on WhatsApp of the draft translation of the Arabic word *ḍallāl* (unaware) in Q 93:7, which was translated as "deviant" on social media by Evie Effendi, a young Sundanese Muslim activist of Pemuda Hijrah in Bandung. Many team members conveyed their criticism when discussing

Effendi's translation, not only in relation to his incorrect understanding of the word *ḍallāl* but also his background as a young activist who uses social media as his online *dakwah* platform. Effendi's translation of *ḍallāl* went viral, and all members of the group chat agreed that Effendi (who is a close friend of Hanan Attaki, who has studied in Egypt and is the leading light among young Muslim activists in Indonesia) needs to study the Qurʾan in more depth, as his friend has done, before engaging in *daʿwa* activities. In addition to the group chat, team members also communicated with each other in meetings and workshop programs held at UIN Bandung and various hotels.

The translation process

The formation of the translation team and social media group set the Qurʾan translation process in motion. The following section covers the stages of that process from the beginning until the end of the project.

The first stage consisted of several meetings held at the Ushuluddin Faculty meeting room and in the dean's office on 8 March 2018, 25 April 2018, 25 June 2018, 20 July 2018 and 1 November 2018. Their purpose was to strengthen mutual agreement among the Qurʾanic studies scholars and linguists involved, to discuss translation guidelines and – on the part of the linguists – to review existing translations.

During the second phase, a survey on colloquial language was carried out to map current expressions and forms in the colloquial Sundanese used by young Sundanese people, especially Generation Z, in their daily lives.[59] This generation grew up amid a decline in the use of the Sundanese language, and their daily language is different from that of previous generations of Sundanese speakers. One of the peculiarities of the language used by younger generations is the increasing number of loan words, as they have a tendency to conceive of what they want to say in Indonesian and then translate it into Sundanese, with the result that the Indonesian grammatical system is increasingly dominant in the millennial generation's speech patterns. The Sundanese language they use is simple, full of loan words and without registers.

The language survey was conducted by the translation team at UIN Bandung, where the members of the Qurʾanic scholars' team teach (predominantly at the Ushuluddin Faculty and Arts and Humanities Faculty), over the course of two weeks (13–27 March 2018). For this purpose, I distributed an older Sundanese Qurʾan translation entitled *Al-Qur'an Miwah* to my students. *Al-Qur'an Miwah* was the result of a project of Sundanese Qurʾan translation which was compiled by the government with a much larger team of translators, and published by the West Javanese government and the Regional Office of the Ministry of Religious Affairs of West Java in 2000. Hundreds of Sundanese Muslim students participated in the survey on everyday language. They were instructed to read, copy and give input and responses to *Al-Qur'an Miwah* as part of the final assignment. Specifically, they were asked to give suggestions and responses related to six issues: 1) unfamiliar words, 2) incomprehensible sentences, 3) repeated words, 4) Sundanese

colloquial language, 5) incorrectly translated sentences and 6) translated words that misrepresent the Arabic Qurʾan. The fourth issue in particular proved to be very important for the team of translators because proximity to contemporary Sundanese became one of the distinctive features of the project that distinguishes it from previous translations.

The third step in the project was informing the Sundanese public about the new translation through mass media such as television, newspapers and social media in order to receive feedback on the quality of the translation. One of the television news programs that reported on the project was Kalawarta on TVRI Bandung (on Tuesday, 13 March 2018, at 3:00 p.m.). In addition to television, a regional newspaper, *Galamedia*, also reported on the project with the title *UIN terjemahkan Al-Qur'an ke bahasa Sunda* ("UIN Scholars Translate the Qurʾan into the Sundanese Language").[60] News of the project was also shared through social media applications and platforms such as WhatsApp and Facebook. There were no noteworthy reactions to the project on the part of the media, partly because of the perceived trustworthiness of the translation team, who were mostly well received as experts in Qurʾanic studies and the Sundanese language but also due to the reluctance of the media to ask critical questions about a religious project.

The fourth step to be undertaken was the translation process itself. Each of the seven experts in the Qurʾanic studies group translated four or five sections (*juzʾ*) of the Qurʾan into Sundanese over the course of two months (April and May; the deadline was 26 May 2018) that coincided with the fasting month, Ramadan 1439 H. The team leader was instructed by the Research and Development Center for Literature to give some specific reference works to all members of the Qurʾanic studies team, such as *Al-Qur'an dan Terjemahnya*, the official government translation into Indonesian published by the Indonesian Ministry of Religious Affairs in 2002. (As mentioned, his government translation has also previously served as a basis for other government translation projects into regional languages.)[61] In addition to *Al-Qur'an dan Terjemahnya*, *Al-Qur'an Miwah*, also mentioned previously, also served as a reference. Finally, the translation team incorporated feedback received from students in the survey on colloquial Sundanese language. The members of the Qurʾanic studies team were also instructed by the team leader to use a number of Arabic Qurʾan commentaries to gain additional opinions on how difficult verses could be understood.

In the fifth step of the project, the Sundanese linguists carried out corrections to the first drafts of the translations. These drafts were then examined by the team of linguists from Padjadjaran University and each scholar read and corrected ten sections, or *juzʾ*. The linguists' task was to correct all errors made by the Qurʾanic studies team in terms of both inaccurate word choice and structural errors in the target language, such as the use of Malay-Indonesian expressions (*kamalayon*, that is, words that were influenced by the structure of Bahasa Melayu and Indonesia), Sundanese syntax, typos and other mistakes. Their corrections then served as the focus of discussions during the workshop "Translation of the Qurʾan into Sundanese", which initiated the sixth step: the workshop program. This workshop was split into two parts and held in a hotel. Attendance was not limited to the team

of translators; participants also included representatives of the Indonesian government from the Research and Development Center for Literature, lecturers in Qurʾanic studies and officials and staff from UIN Bandung. The workshop was intended to provide feedback on the translation work undertaken by the Qurʾanic studies experts, who were the main speakers, and to receive suggestions from team members and the other experts in Qurʾanic studies and Sundanese linguistics who participated as discussants. Both speakers and discussants wrote a brief report that included suggestions by the discussants, but also by the other participants. In addition to discussions about the translation at hand, there were also debates among the speakers, discussants and participants about the dynamics of the Arabic Qurʾan as the source text, Sundanese as the target language and the socio-religious context of the translation. I will elaborate on these in the next section of this chapter.

The seventh step was dedicated to reviewing the translation. The feedback acquired during the two three-day workshops was examined by the Qurʾanic studies team. Based on these suggestions, they improved their translations over the next two weeks. Improvements generally related to technical errors and Sundanese syntax and were carried out in agreement with the Sundanese linguist group.

The eighth step in the process entailed the examination and validation of the translation work by the Sundanese community. In 2019, the translation team invited Islamic scholars, academics, religious authorities and media representatives in West Java to give them feedback. The results of the validation and public examination were then discussed among the translation team.

The ninth step involved editing and preparing the translation for publication: the translation team sent the final draft of the translation to the committee at the Research and Development Center for Literature in Jakarta, who then carried out the final steps of editing. The committee's technical team was responsible for the proofreading, editing and layout of the translation prior to printing. The printed version of the final draft was about 600 pages long.

Following this, the project entered its tenth stage, licensing, or *taṣḥīḥ*. The license for publication of all Indonesian Qurʾan translations is granted by the Qurʾanic license institution, the Lajnah Pentashih Mushaf Al-Qur'an (LPMQ), in Jakarta, and is a prerequisite for printing the Arabic text of the Qurʾan in a given work. This signed certificate must appear in the printed copy of the translation.[62]

The eleventh and final step entailed launching, printing and distributing the translation. The Research and Development Center for Literature finally released the final draft in the form of dummy copies at the end of 2019. The printed dummy copies were used as samples in the launch of the new translation, which was officially announced on 13 December 2019 by the Indonesian Ministry of Religious Affairs in Jakarta. The Research and Development Center for Literature, the translation team and the executive committee of the Ushuluddin Faculty of UIN Bandung then invited the Governor of West Java to participate in the book launch event. I myself delivered a speech on the stage, having acted on both the translation and linguistic teams. The final draft of the translation was then officially published in 2020 with the license number 1633/LPMQ.01/TL.02.1/11/2020 and distributed

throughout Indonesia by the Research and Development Center for Literature.[63] This marked the end of the project.

Translators' consensus and guidelines

One of the most important issues that came up in the translators' discussions, both in the WhatsApp group chat and at the workshop meeting, was that of reaching a consensus on the appropriate methods and sources to use and establishing guidelines based on this, so as to make the translation process more efficient. The guidelines that were eventually agreed upon were the following:

a) the use of other translation works that were published by the Indonesian government as sources of guidance;
b) the need to take colloquial Sundanese into account;
c) maintaining consistency in the use of Sundanese words;
d) an agreed-upon stylesheet outlining technical issues.

a) The use of other translation works as reference works

As mentioned, two Qurʾan translations were used as reference works for the project. The first was *Al-Qur'an dan Terjemahnya*, in the edition published by the Indonesian Ministry of Religious Affairs in 2002, which replaced the Saudi edition (1990); and the second was *Al-Qur'an Miwah Tarjamahna dina Basa Sunda* ("The Qurʾan and Its Sundanese Translation"), which was published by the West Javanese government and the Regional Office of the Ministry of Religious Affairs of West Java in 2000.[64] These two translations were used to facilitate the translation process for the team of translators, because translating the Qurʾan directly from the Arabic Qurʾan by referring to Qurʾanic commentaries alone is an extremely complex and time-consuming task and the translation team only had two months (April–May 2018) to complete their first draft. These time constraints were not only due to the project schedule arranged by the committee but also due to the allotted budget. However, the translators were advised to consult Qurʾan commentaries, especially when they translated sensitive or controversial verses such as Q 5:51 which, as previously mentioned, had caused controversy over the question of the permissibility of non-Muslim political leadership in 2017 and led to blasphemy charges against the former governor of Jakarta, Basuki Tjahaja Purnama, or Ahok.[65] In addition, the use of a previous Sundanese translation, *Al-Qur'an Miwah*, served as a reference in terms of required revisions and updates: the translation project aimed to use different words than *Al-Qur'an Miwah*.[66]

The Research and Development Center for Literature instructed the translators to use the 2002 Indonesian government edition, *Al-Qur'an dan Terjemahnya*, as a template not only for the actual translation but also for the systematic order, translation structure and the segmentation of each section of their translation. For example, the structure of the Indonesian translation was to be followed in terms of the use of parentheses and descriptions in footnotes. The translation team also translated and incorporated some explanations of the meanings of Qurʾanic verses and

the circumstances of their revelation (*asbāb al-nuzūl*) given in the footnotes of *Al-Qur'an dan Terjemahnya*. Such explanations are usually necessary in a translation in order to avoid misunderstandings on the part of the readers, for example, in order to clarify obscure (*mubham*) terms such as the word *al-Ṣābiʾūn*, which refers to a religious group mentioned in the Qurʾan; to explain the disjointed (*muqaṭṭaʿa*) Arabic letters at the beginning of some sūras; or to elaborate on words with multiple meanings (*mushtarak*) such as *qurūʾ*, *lāmastum* and *fitna*. Other aspects of *Al-Qur'an dan Terjemahnya* followed by the translation team included its approach to rendering the Arabic conjunction *wāw* (and) at the beginning of sentences and its views regarding Qurʾanic verses on theology, fiqh, gender, politics and other dogmatic or ideological issues. This might convey the impression that the project is merely a "translation of a translation" of the Qurʾan. However, this form of "translation of a translation" is not a new phenomenon in the history of Qurʾan translation in West Java,[67] and there was also good reason to use *Al-Qur'an Miwah* as a reference work. *Al-Qur'an Miwah* was prepared by Islamic scholars who were appointed by the West Javanese government and the Regional Office of the Ministry of Religious Affairs of West Java. It uses many words from the ancient Sundanese language, or *basa buhun*, which constitutes a stark difference between *Al-Qur'an Miwah* and the new translation. However, the translation team only needed to copy *Al-Qur'an Miwah* to their computers, then change the diction and the structure of its sentences, adjust it according to the structure of the 2002 Indonesian government edition and finally apply the guidelines.

b) Sundanese colloquial language

The colloquial or contemporary Sundanese language (*kiwari*) is used in daily communication. This language tends to be simple and comprehensible (*basajan*);[68] it only uses an intermediate register (*sinigar tengah*) and a restricted code and does not use words from ancient Sundanese (*buhun*). It is usually used in informal settings rather than as a literary language.[69]

Terjemahan Al-Qur'an Bahasa Sunda uses colloquial language not only to make it sound more dynamic and distinguish it from previous translations such as *Al-Qur'an Miwah* but also to make it comprehensible to all Sundanese people, especially the millennial generation.[70] Although some questions remain with regard to the boundary between colloquial and pre-modern Sundanese, the translators finally agreed to define colloquial Sundanese language as being that used by Sundanese people at the present time. The team, as explained previously, needed feedback on this use of popular language, which is why they conducted a survey of Sundanese students at UIN Bandung. The enlightening results of the survey and the students' suggestions were one of the reasons that using colloquial language became such an important part of the translation guidelines.

c) Language consistency

Consistency in the use of Sundanese words and sentences for reiterations of Arabic Qurʾanic words and phrases and their synonyms was important to all members of

the translation team. Therefore, the team agreed to establish translation guidelines for certain Sundanese words in order to maintain consistency in translating the Arabic Qurʾan into Sundanese. One of the conditions for using these Sundanese words was that the translation not deviate from the meaning of the Qurʾanic verse (*murād al-āya*). For instance, the Arabic clause *alladhīna kafarū* was consistently translated by the team as *jalma-jalma kupur* (those who reject faith). Meanwhile, *al-kāfirūn* was consistently translated as *jalma-jalma kapir* (the unbelievers). These translations were chosen to reflect the different syntax of these two frequently occurring clauses; moreover, the choice of these particular words means that the sound of the vowels in Sundanese is similar to the Arabic original: the word *kafarū*, which has a *u* in the end, is phonetically close to the word *kupur* in Sundanese; likewise, the word *al-kāfirūn* is close to the word *kapir*. Perhaps most importantly, there is no difference in meaning between *alladhīna kafarū* and *al-kāfirūn*, and this is reflected in the Sundanese words chosen to translate them. The translation team ultimately agreed to aim for consistency in the Sundanese translations of these terms.

Another case of Sundanese words and sentences that had to be used by the translation team consistently are the words *saéstuna, bener-bener* and *satemenna*, which all have a meaning similar to "indeed". The translation team agreed to prescribe the use of the words *saéstuna* or *bener-bener* for the Arabic particle *qad* in combination with a verb in the past tense; the word *satemenna* was used for translating the Arabic particle *inna*; and both *nūn al-tawkīd* and *lām al-tawkīd*, which also mean "indeed" or "verily", were translated as *bener-bener* in Sundanese. Consistency in the use of Sundanese words and sentences was important because there are many Sundanese words that have similar meanings. The translation team had to decide on certain Sundanese words and sentences in order to maintain transparency to the source text when translating the Arabic Qurʾan.[71]

d) Stylesheet

In addition to the aforementioned content-related guidelines, the translation team also established a consensus on technical issues, such as the use of a specific Arabic transliteration manual and the use of parentheses to denote additional, explanatory words or sentences that are not used in the Arabic Qurʾan, exclamation marks (for instance after the sentence *hé jalma-jalma nu iman!* = "o you who believe"), italicization of non-standard Arabic loanwords in the Sundanese text (with an explanation in the footnote) and the use of the accented letter é (*téléng*) to distinguish it from e in Sundanese spelling, which could influence the meaning. The manual that was used for the Latin transliteration of Arabic is based on the joint decree (Surat Keputusan Bersama, SKB) by the minister of religious affairs and the minister of education and culture of the Republic of Indonesia No. 158, 1987 and No. 0543b/U, 1987.

In this section, I have given some background information on the formation of the translation team and the various stages of the project, as well as issues that the team members had to agree upon. The following section will discuss the negotiations between the Qurʾanic studies scholars and the scholars of Sundanese

linguistics and highlight some of their debates, which bridged different perspectives on the two languages and disciplinary methodologies, as well as the government interests that were represented by the Research and Development Center for Literature.

Language negotiations, the Muslim mainstream and state ideology

A Qurʾan translation written by an individual scholar might potentially have more mistakes in terms of language accuracy than a translation that is compiled by a group of translators. In the case of translations that are conducted by a translation team, the collaboration between Qurʾanic studies scholars and linguists, who have different areas of specialization, makes it easier for them to avoid technical and grammatical errors. The *Terjemahan Al-Qur'an Bahasa Sunda* project involved two translation experts in both teams, a configuration that can also be found in other Qurʾan translation projects in West Java.

For *Terjemahan Al-Qur'an Bahasa Sunda*, the process of assembling the team to work on it, reaching a consensus on translation methods and formulating the translation guidelines were more complex than the translation process itself. This is because a translation team working on a government project not only has to reconcile the interests and opinions of the two groups of experts actually undertaking the translation but also has to take into consideration those of the central and the regional government.

According to Federspiel, Qurʾan translations (and commentaries) that are published by the Indonesian government have several general objectives. First, their production can be regarded as evidence that the state is involved in shaping the nation's Islamic value system. Second, as religious scholars from the State Islamic Institutes and Universities are involved in translating and preparing the accompanying commentary, they receive an opportunity to show off their experience and ability as scholars of scripture. This also benefits the state in that it gains prestige, and therefore authority, vis-à-vis other Muslim-majority countries. Further to this, the government wants to define more detailed standards for the production of commentaries and translations. This relates to issues of government control regarding the Muslim majority and state ideology. Finally, a particular group of Indonesians, both within and outside of government, who are referred to here as "Muslim Nationalists", are anxious to have their ideological viewpoint propagated through the production of commentaries and translations.[72]

Muslim Nationalists take the viewpoint that the philosophical theory of the Pancasila ("five principles") state is an ideal system for the nation because it guarantees the diversity of religions. They also believe that the Archipelagic State of the Indonesian Republic (NKRI) is the final formation of the state. Pancasila and the Archipelagic State of the Indonesian Republic are principles that were enshrined in the Indonesian constitution in order to unite all religious, ethnic, linguistic and cultural groups. The Indonesian state has declared that it is not a religious state in the sense that any specific religion is considered to be the state religion, but it does not aim to separate religion from the daily lives of its citizens. Although Indonesia

is neither a theocracy nor a secular state, the state respects religions and could be called a religious nation state in which the ideal is that state and religion exist in harmony. Muslim Nationalists believe that Islam, as the religion of the majority of the Indonesian population, guarantees a harmonious coexistence of state and religion.[73] This state ideology has been adopted by most mainstream Muslims in Indonesia.

The *Terjemahan Al-Qur'an Bahasa Sunda* project touches upon the interests of the Muslim mainstream and state ideology. In terms of ideology, the desire to uphold the Archipelagic State of the Indonesian Republic and to counter radicalism provides a basic incentive for the state to support translation projects. In addition to this, government production of Qurʾan translations is a way to help the government gain the support of its Muslim citizens. The government established the Qurʾan's hegemony over society by repurposing budget channels, infrastructure or facilities and management in order to facilitate religious scholarship and produce religious texts. Therefore, the translation project cannot be separated from the politicization of religion and should be regarded as a governmental effort to assist Muslims who support the regional and national government and to promote Islam.[74]

Generally speaking, religion may be used to legitimize a ruler or government[75] who, or which, in turn, may support believers in this religion by fulfilling their socio-religious needs. The Indonesian government's Qurʾan translation program is part of such an effort to establish and uphold the state's hegemony over religious institutions in various regions, ethnic and linguistic groups. Through the project, the state uses its influence to create religious harmony and stability. Qurʾan translation projects, on the one hand, have political meaning in terms of legitimizing political leadership and stabilizing its rule, but on the other hand, they also accommodate Muslims' socio-religious rights. The state thus uses the Qurʾan in order to encourage acceptance and harmony in the socio-religious structure of Indonesian society.[76] In other words, projects such as *Terjemahan Al-Qur'an Bahasa Sunda* are used by the government as political instruments through which to highlight the success story of religious development in Indonesia.

This issue of the ideology of the state and the Muslim majority was one of the three main topics in the negotiations between the two groups of experts in the committee and the government representatives that I will come back to in further detail. First, however, I will provide some insight into two other topics that were discussed in great depth, namely the perspective of the source language and the perspective of the target language.

The source language perspective

One of the topics that was much discussed by the translation team was the Arabic language of the Qurʾan. Arabic has a specific vocabulary, language style (*uslūb*) and sentence structure (*tartīb*) which cannot be fully translated into Sundanese.[77] Instead, the peculiarities of the structure of the Arabic Qurʾan formed the basis for the Sundanese translation. In other words, the Sundanese text reflects the way that the translation team adjusted certain words and phrasings in Sundanese with the special characteristics of the Arabic Qurʾan in mind.

Sundanese, like Arabic, also has a wide and varied vocabulary, which made it easy for the translation team to choose words that are as close as possible to the meaning of the Qurʾan, in turn making it relatively easy to adjust the translation to match the source text. The translation team agreed that the choice of Sundanese vocabulary should be based on the precedence of the Arabic, rather than the Sundanese, structure, the idea behind this being that the reader would be enabled to understand the structure of the Arabic sentences.

One example of the type of discussions that took place among the translation team concerns the verbs *raʾā, naẓara* and *baṣara*. These three Arabic verbs have similar meanings, and are usually translated as "to see" or "to watch". The Sundanese language, like Arabic, has many verbs that are related to the function of the eyes, such as *ménjo, ningal, ningali, niténan, nengetan, mireungeuh, nempo, neuteup, katémbong, kaciri, katara, melong, mencrong, merong, mureleng, muncereng, mandéléng, ngilikan, noong, ngintip, nengo, ngalengo, moconghok, ngarérét, ngalieuk, ngadilak, ngadelék, ngelétan, ngelepan* and *ngiceupan*.[78] The translation team analyzed the exact meaning and use of these Arabic and Sundanese verbs in order to find the most fitting Sundanese equivalent. Finally, the team agreed to translate the verb *raʾā* as *ningali/ménjo* because it has a similar meaning ("to see"); *baṣara* as *nengetan*, because it means "to see well"; and *naẓara* as *niténan*, because it means "to look, to observe".[79]

Another example of Arabic verbs with similar meanings can be found in the lexical units *a-fa-lā taʿqilūn*, *a-fa-lā tatafakkarūn*, *a-fa-lā yatadabbarūn* and *a-fa-lā tubṣirūn*, all of which revolve around the meaning "to think" or "to consider". Wherever possible, the translation team chose Sundanese translations based on the root of the verb in the source language, which is generally used as a loan word in Sundanese. For example, *a-fa-lā taʿqilūn* was translated as *naha aranjeun teu ngagunakeun akal* ("will you not use your mind?") because the source of the word *akal* is the Arabic *ʿaqala*, which found its way into Sundanese as a loan word. Similarly, *a-fa-lā tatafakkarūn* was translated as *naha aranjeun teu mikir* ("will you then not consider?") because the source of the Sundanese word *mikir* is the Arabic *fakara*; *a-fa-lā yatadabbarūn* became *naha maranehna teu ngalenyepan* ("do they not muse?") because *ngalenyepan* has a similar meaning as *tadabbara*; and *a-fa-lā tubṣirūn* was translated as *naha aranjeun teu nengetan* ("will you not then see?") because *nengetan* was the translation of the word *baṣara* that the translation team agreed upon.

The translation team had long debates about which Sundanese terms would provide suitable translations for specific words from the Arabic Qurʾan because they believed that the Arabic Qurʾan has an exalted position due to its nature as a miracle of God. The team members also believed in the doctrine that there is a certain reason God chose Arabic words that are similar in their meanings. Thus, even if the same Sundanese word could be used to render different Arabic words with similar meaning, the translators decided to use different Sundanese words in order to represent the Arabic source text as closely as possible. This means that the translation team did not limit themselves to simply translating the Arabic source text into Sundanese. Instead, they undertook the difficult task of doing their best to make the Sundanese linguistic system work with the Arabic linguistic system by prioritizing Arabic terms that are directly used as loan words in Sundanese.

There is also a hierarchical diglossic relationship in Arabic between *al-fuṣḥā*, or standard Arabic, which is regarded as authoritative, and *al-ʿāmmiyya*, which is used colloquially and has no flection. Standard Arabic is an example of a prestigious literary variety of a language (the *H* variety) that is considered superior to the vernacular dialects of the language (*L* varieties). *H* and *L* language variants are strictly compartmentalized according to appropriate contexts of use, and the *H* variety is typically characterized as "somehow more beautiful, more logical, better able to express important thoughts".[80] While the *H* variety is invested with immutable timelessness, *L* varieties are considered inconstant and unruly. In the case of Arabic, the diglossic divide of *H* and *L* is bolstered by the powerful textual authority of the Qurʾan as the holy book. As Islamic teachings spread to non-Arabophone populations, the powerful *H* status of *fuṣḥā* spread as well, even though new Muslim converts usually did not actually speak any *L* varieties of Arabic. Instead, local vernaculars often assumed the structural position of *L*, with Qurʾanic Arabic gaining the status of a timeless language of divine authority.[81] *Terjemahan Al-Qur'an Bahasa Sunda* thus also demonstrates how the position of Standard Arabic as the H variety cannot be contested by the Sundanese L language. This can be seen, for example, in the translators' use of Arabic loan words, which signifies the precedence of the Arabic Qurʾan.

In most cases, the translation team discussed Arabic words in order to match them with those Sundanese words that come closest in meaning. Another option was to give a Sundanese translation of one Arabic term that consists of not just one word but several words, in order to convey the meaning of the Arabic term in sufficient detail and accuracy. The Qurʾanic studies team members then asked the linguists to confirm their choice, on these occasions prioritizing the meaning of the Arabic Qurʾan.

The target language perspective

Although the translation team focused on the Arabic Qurʾan, they also realized the importance of Sundanese as their mother tongue and as the target language and tried to accommodate it in some parts of the translation. The team believed that each language has its own unique characteristics, in terms of syntax, semantics and pragmatic choices, although they believed the Arabic of the Qurʾan to rank higher than Sundanese.[82] The Qurʾanic studies experts thus negotiated with the linguistics team to adjust their translations to conform to the structures of the Sundanese language so that the translation's distinctively Sundanese characteristics became an essential feature of the translation. The following examples illustrate the ways that the Sundanese language was used to inform the translation of the Qurʾan in *Terjemahan Al-Qur'an Bahasa Sunda*:

a) The use of Sundanese sentence patterns

Sundanese, like Indonesian, offers the option to either form active clauses with a sequence of subject, verb, object and adverb (she did this today) or – as is often

preferred – through passive clauses (this was done by her today).[83] This is different from Arabic syntax, where passive clauses are more uncommon and, in verbal clauses, the subject typically follows the verb or is implied in it; for example, the verb *faʿalat* means "she did" and may imply a female subject that does not need to be specified by a noun or pronoun. These differences led to a discussion among the translators on this grammatical issue. The expression of *al-qabūl* in the wedding ritual, which is part of *al-ījāb waʾl-qabūl* (ind. *ijab qabul* [the proposal and its acceptance]), for instance, is phrased in the ḥadīth and fiqh as *qabiltu nikāḥahā*, (lit.: "accept – I – marriage – of her"). This raised the question among the translation team whether this should be translated into Sundanese as passive (*tarima abdi nikahna*; "accepted – by me – marriage of her") or as active (*abdi narima nikahna*; "I – accept – marriage of her"). This is an issue of significance because some Sundanese Muslims consider the act of *al-qabūl* by saying *abdi narima nikahna* illegitimate because the sentence pattern does not exactly match the Arabic pattern. The translation team finally agreed with this view because the word *tarima* ("accepted") is the first word that matters in determining whether the bridegroom has accepted the bride or not. This utterance in wedding rituals is part of an oral expression that seems strange in terms of Sundanese syntax when written down.

A contrasting example related to the difference in word order occurred with the phrase *wa-biʾl-ākhirah hum yūqinūn* ("and of the Hereafter – they – are sure") in Q 2:5. It is difficult to translate this phrase into Sundanese, whether it is translated with put the object before the subject and predicate: *jeung kana poé akhir aranjeunna yakin* ("and of the hereafter, they are sure"), or put the subject and predicate before the object: *jeung aranjeunna yakin kana poé akhir* ("and they are sure of the hereafter"). Eventually, the translators agreed on the latter, because they chose in this instance to prioritize the Sundanese sentence structure over the Arabic. The first option for translating this phrase, which follows Arabic syntax to put the object before the subject and predicate, would sound strange in Sundanese.

b) The use of phonetic transcription

Another issue relates to the pronunciation and spelling of certain Arabic consonants which are rarely used in the Sundanese alphabet and have undergone a sound change. In Sundanese, the consonants f, q, v, x, z, kh and sh, which generally only appear in loanwords, are pronounced as p, k, p, k, j, h and s, respectively.[84] Therefore, another issue that arose for the translators related to the use of these letters in *Terjemahan Al-Qurʾan Bahasa Sunda*. For instance, this difficulty appears in the spelling of words and names such as *fitnah* versus *pitnah* (slander), *Yusuf* versus *Yusup*, *Firʾaun* versus *Pirʾaun* (Pharaoh) and *zakat* versus *jakat* (alms). Further discussion arose regarding the use of phonetic transcriptions of vowels to transcribe words such as *Allah* or *Alloh*, *rasul* or *rosul* (the messenger), *saleh* or *soleh* (pious) and *rahmat* or *rohmat* (mercy). This is because the Sundanese pronunciation of vowels in Arabic loanwords tends to be different from their spelling. Eventually, the translators agreed to use the Sundanese version of the consonants, such as *pitnah* instead of the Arabic *fitnah*, but based their phonetic transcription

of vowels on the Arabic pronunciation: unlike some Sundanese dictionaries,[85] they write *Allah* instead of *Alloh*.

c) The problem of language registers

The problem of language registers in Sundanese (*undak usuk basa*) also became a point of discussion among the translators. Sundanese registers are used according to differences in age, position, familiarity and other factors that influence the required level of politeness. There are two main registers: highly respectful language and informal language.[86] The Qurʾanic studies scholars often had more difficulties in applying Sundanese registers than the linguists. The way they negotiated the application of these registers can be seen, for instance, in the use of the pronouns for subject and object. For example, there are many first-person pronouns that can be used for a subject in Sundanese such as *kami* (sg./pl.), *kuring* (sg.), *urang* (sg.), *abdi* (sg.), *kaula* (sg.), *aing* (sg.), *aing saréréa* (pl.), *abdi sadaya* (pl.), *kuring sadaya* (pl.) or *urang sadaya* (pl.). Such humilific or honorific pronouns that express differences in politeness and status are not part of the vocabulary of the Arabic Qurʾan, so that the Qurʾanic studies scholars often found it difficult to choose between the Sundanese options, whereas the linguists had a clear understanding of the conditions under which pronouns of certain registers should be used. The translation team finally agreed to give the linguists the authority to choose which option they viewed as appropriate on the basis that they understood the target language better than the Qurʾanic studies scholars. The linguists subsequently chose to use the word *kami* whenever God is the first-person subject of the sentence, on the basis that *kami* is used to refer politely to someone who has a high position. (At the opposite end of the spectrum are the pronouns *kaula* and *aing*, which have an impolite sense and are used when the speaker is angry and therefore do not occur in the translation at all.) Meanwhile, the pronouns *kuring* and *urang* (sg.) were used for the believer as a subject in impolite, informal talk with or about unbelievers, in contrast to *abdi* (sg.), which was used for the believer as a subject when they talk politely to God or other believers. The difference between polite and impolite expressions was also applied to the use of the first-person plural pronouns *abdi sadaya*, *kuring sadaya* and *urang sadaya* as the subject.[87]

The ideology of the state and the Muslim mainstream

In addition to discussions about the choice of Sundanese words from the perspective of the source and target languages, the translation team also debated their translation of Qurʾanic verses in terms of the ideology of the state and the Muslim majority in Indonesia since translation as an ethical practice not only involves semantic considerations but also demands aesthetic, ideological and political accountability.[88] Given this, it is impossible for a government-backed Sundanese Qurʾan translation to be free from the political and ideological influences of the state and the Muslim majority. Through the Research and Development Center for Literature, the Indonesian government aims to represent itself as the protector

of Islam and Muslim society, on the basis that Muslims constitute the majority of Indonesia's population. The fact that *Terjemahan Al-Qur'an Bahasa Sunda* was undertaken with the involvement of lecturers of UIN Bandung and Unpad also invested the translation project with a certain amount of authority, as the members of the translation team can be considered to be working within the framework of official government efforts to provide standard reference works for Muslims, especially in West Java. The translation project was thus supposed to serve as encouragement for a discourse on the uniformity of sacred texts on both the regional and national level.[89]

The effects of political and ideological influences on this project can be seen in the approach taken to the translation of a number of verses concerning issues of theology, fiqh, gender and socio-politics, on which the team members eventually sided with the interpretation followed by the Muslim mainstream (*jumhūr*) as it is typically defined in Indonesia today, that is, in terms of the views held by members of major mass organizations such as the NU (Nahdlatul Ulama) and the Muhammadiyah. Accordingly, the *Terjemahan Al-Qur'an Bahasa Sunda* translation team based their translations of such verses on the theology of Ashʿarism and on the fiqh of the Shafiʿi school of legal thought. In addition, the translation team also sided with the state ideology in supporting the concept of diversity of religions, ethnicities, languages and cultures. The Pancasila has defined the Indonesian people as living united in diversity since the state was founded, and tolerance among adherents of various religions and on the part of the government has become an important basis of Indonesian state ideology. The emergence of radical and intolerant Muslim tendencies, especially after the reformasi era, was an important reason for the translation team to commit itself to the side of mainstream Muslims and the state ideology. This translation therefore supports the state ideology of Pancasila, the Archipelagic State of the Indonesian Republic and teachings of tolerance among religions.

Moving on from politics to gender politics, the translation team used the 2002 edition of *Al-Qur'an dan Terjemahnya*, the government translation of the Qurʾan into Indonesian, as a reference for dealing with gender relations, even though this translation was considered biased by one of the participants, who is an expert in that regard. The assumption of a gender bias in the 2002 edition emerged during the workshop program which the participants attended, during which the previously mentioned participant argued that many verses of the Qurʾan are translated in a biased way in the 2002 edition. One example is the translation of Q 4:34, specifically the word *al-rijāl*, which refers to men in terms of sex, not gender, as will be discussed in the following. From this perspective, it is regrettable that *Al-Qur'an dan Terjemahnya* was used as a reference for verses relating to gender issues in the *Terjemahan Al-Qur'an Bahasa Sunda* project.

The decision to accord with the views of the state in the final translation cannot be separated from the relationship of the translation team with the Research and Development Center for Literature, which represented the government and which ordered the translators to consistently follow the structure and content of the 2002 edition of *Al-Qur'an dan Terjemahnya*. These instructions to accord with

state ideology are related to the importance and visibility of the project, which was conducted by an authoritative team of translators and is therefore likely to produce a much-used reference work for Sundanese Muslim society. For this reason, above all, it is only to be expected that the translation of sensitive and controversial Qurʾanic verses was based on the opinion of mainstream ulama while simultaneously providing a translation that supported the government's intention to promote social and interreligious harmony in the country.[90] In the following passages, I will give some examples that will illustrate the ideological background of the translation discussed previously.

a) Theology (ʿaqīda)

When translating verses concerning theology, or *ʿaqīda*, the translation team followed the precepts of Ashʿari theology as interpreted by the Muslim majority in Indonesia. This particularly concerns, for example, Qurʾanic verses that touch upon the problem of anthropomorphism, which is rejected by the Ashʿari school. Thus, *yad Allāh*, literally "God's hand", in Q 48:10 was translated as "God's authority" (*kakawasaan Allah*); *fa-thamma wajhu llāh*, literally "there is the face of God", in Q 2:115 was translated as "facing the supreme substance of God" (*nya sanghareupkeun ka zat Allah*); and *istawā ʿalā l-ʿarsh* ("He set Himself up on the Throne") in Q 7:54 was translated as "He established himself on the Throne" (*neja/lenggah di luhur ʿArasy*). An explanation for why these choices are in line with Ashʿarism is given in the footnotes of the translation.

Likewise, the team followed Ashʿari teachings with regard to the theologically contested issue of free will versus predetermination. Thus, they translated Q 35:8, *fa-inna llāh yuḍill man yashāʾ wa-yahdī man yashāʾ* ("God misleads whom He wills and gives His guidance to whom he wills") as *Nya Alloh nyasarkeun jeung méré pituduh ka saha baé nu dikersakeun ku Mantenna (saluyu jeung usahana masing-masing)*" or "God misleads and gives His guidance to whom He wills [according to their own efforts]". Here, the translators added the clause *saluyu jeung usahana masing-masing* ("according to their own efforts") in parentheses so as to adapt the verse to the teachings of Ashʿarism, which recognizes the significance of human effort (*kasb*), as opposed to the predeterminationist school which believes that humans have no free will and merely follow God's decree.[91]

The same is true for the translation of Q 8:17, *fa-lam taqtulūhum wa-lakinn Allāh qatalahum*, *wa-mā ramaita idh ramaita wa-lākin Allāh ramā* ("It was not you who killed them; God killed them"), which is rendered as *mangka, (sabenerna mah) lain aranjeun nu maéhan maranéhna téh, tapi Alloh anu maéhan maranéhna. Lain hidep nu malédog waktu hidep malédog téh, tapi Alloh nu malédog. (Alloh midamel kitu téh pikeun ngabinasakeun maranéhna)* ("It was not you who killed them, but it was Allah [His essence] who killed them; when you threw, it was not your act, but Allah's. [Allah is doing it in order to destroy them]"). The additional sentence in the parentheses, *Allah midamel kitu téh pikeun ngancurkeun maranéhna* ("Allah is doing it in order to destroy them"), conveys the idea that this statement should not be taken to signify that human actions are controlled by God

fully, without any human agency, as is believed by the determinists. It also does not mean that the acts of God and men are one, as believed by the adherents of the *wāḥidiyyah* who believe in the unity of being (*waḥdat al-wujūd*). Only on a metaphysical level, not in this world, is it God who destroys unbelievers. This addition is meant to ensure that readers will understand this passage in line with Ashʿari doctrine because the human, from the viewpoint of Ashʿarism, takes possession (*kasb*) of his or her actions; they are created but not solely controlled by God.[92]

b) Islamic jurisprudence

The translation team also sided with the views of the Indonesian Muslim mainstream when they translated Qurʾanic verses on Islamic jurisprudence or fiqh, especially those regarding controversial issues concerning the rituals of Islam. They aligned their translation with the teachings of the Shafiʿi School, to which the majority of Muslims in Indonesia adhere.[93] This may be seen, for instance, in their translations of Q 4:43 and Q 5:6, *fa-lam tajidū māʾan fa-tayammamū ṣaʿīdan ṭayyiban* ("and if you do not find water, have recourse to clean dust"). The translators render the word *ṣaʿīdan* as *kekebul taneuh*, which means "dust gained from soil" or "dusty soil". According to the Shafiʿi and Hanbali schools, the ritual ablution of *tayammum* is considered unlawful unless carried out with this kind of dust (*ṣaʾīd*): soil that is not dusty because it is wet or muddy or contains objects such as rocks and gravel is not accepted for *tayammum*. This differs from the opinion of the Maliki and Hanafi schools, which allow stones, sand, gravel and so on to be used for performing *tayammum* as well as (or instead of) soil.[94] The translation team chose the Shafiʿi opinion, on the basis that it accords with that held by mainstream Muslims in Indonesia, and hence opted to use the word *kekebul taneuh* (dusty soil) explicitly when translating the word *ṣaʿīd* to avoid misunderstandings about the type of soil in question.

The translation team's stance on fiqh can also be seen in their translation of the phrase *aw lāmastum al-nisāʾ* ("[if you] have been in contact with women") in the same verse, which describes a condition of ritual impurity. They chose to render the phrase as *paantel kulit*, which means "to touch the skin", instead of *sapatemon*, "to have sexual intercourse". The reason for this is that the Shafiʿi school believes that it is not only sexual intercourse but any contact with the skin of the opposite sex that invalidates ablution. This is different from the position taken by the Hanafi school, which interprets *lāmastum* as only meaning sexual intercourse, and hence believes that touching the skin of the opposite sex does not invalidate ablution.[95]

c) Gender

Gender relations are a particularly contested issue today. The translators chose to align themselves with the views embraced by mainstream traditional fiqh regarding gender issues, especially when it comes to verses concerning the status of men and women. Hence, they favored the perspective of the majority of ulama, despite concerns on the part of Muslim feminists who consider that perspective biased

against women. I personally did not agree with the stance the translation team took on this issue. A case in point is the translation of the phrase *al-rijāl qawwāmūn ʿalā al-nisāʾ bi-mā faḍḍala ʾallāh baʿḍahum ʿalā baʿḍ* in Q 4:34, which has been variously interpreted as meaning "Men are above women/responsible for women/overseers of women because of what God has granted some of them in preference to others". This segment of the verse was rendered by the translation team as *lalaki (salaki) teh pamingpin pikeun awéwé (istri), sabab Allah geus maparin kaleuwihan ka sabagian maranéhna (lalaki) batan nu séjénna (awéwé)* ("Men/husbands are the leaders of women because Allah has given some of them [men] more strength and superiority than the others [women/wives]"). In my opinion, the translation of the verse seems to serve the interests of men. The words in parentheses translate the gender-neutral phrase *baʿḍahum ʿalā baʿḍ* ("some of them in preference to others") in a way that ensures that the verse is understood as saying that God has given strength or superiority to men over women and removes the possibility of reading it the other way around. In addition, I argue that the translation does not critically engage with the meaning of the word *al-rijāl*, which could refer either to sex or to the social construct of gender, nor the meaning of *qawwām*. The latter term, rather than designating superiority or leadership, could also be translated as "bearers of responsibility" or "protectors", which would give it a more egalitarian meaning.[96]

The fact that the Sundanese translation tends to display a gender bias can also be seen in the translation of the verb *wa-ḍribūhunna* (literally: "and hit them", although this understanding has become the subject of controversy since the late twentieth century) in the same verse. In *Terjemahan Al-Qur'an Bahasa Sunda* this verb is rendered as *jeung (mun perlu) pék gebug maranéhanana*, which means "and (if necessary) beat them". The husband is thus ordered to beat his wife, if necessary, without any qualifications or conditions. It would be more in line with contemporary ideals of marriage to translate this verse in a way that does not involve pain for the husband or the wife. For example, the translations "make an example of them", "leave them" or "prevent them from leaving" have all been proposed.[97] Similarly, the gender-neutral phrase in Q 4:3, *aw mā malakat aymānukum* ("what your right hands possesses (i.e., your slaves)", is rendered in Sundanese with a gender bias as *abid awéwé nu dipimilik ku anjeun* ("slave women you own").

d) Socio-political issues

The translation team also sides with the views of the state and Indonesian Muslim mainstream when translating Qurʾanic verses that are relevant to socio-political issues, such as interreligious relations, *jihād*, the Caliphate and usury (*ribā*). For instance, in Q 1:7, the phrase *ghair al-maghḍūb ʿalaihim wa-lā ʾl-ḍāllīn* ("not [the path of] those who have evoked anger nor those who go astray") is often taken to refer to Jews and Christians, based on a widely known *ḥadīth*. The Sundanese translators, however, do not mention Jews and Christians; they render it as *sanés jalanna jalmi-jalmi anu dibenduan (ku Gusti), sareng sanés jalanna jalmi-jalmi anu sasar*, which means "not the path of those who have received (God's) anger, and of those who go astray". Therein it differs from some other translations

in Indonesia whose mention of Jews and Christians in parentheses might directly invoke enmity towards them.[98] This is a good example of an occasion on which the translators' incorporate exegetical material into their translation: it becomes clear that translations are inescapably works of exegesis.[99] It would be completely legitimate for *Terjemahan Al-Qur'an Bahasa Sunda* to include the possibility that Muslims might be among those who have the potential to evoke God's wrath and to go astray. However, the possibility of this reading was immediately rebutted in an explanation given in a footnote, which specified that the people the verse talks about were taking a path other than Islam: *jalmi-jalmi anu dibenduan (ku Gusti) nyaéta anu ngahaja nentang ajaran Islam. Jalmi-jalmi anu sasar nyaéta anu ngahaja nyokot jalan séjen salain ajaran Islam* ("those who have received (God's) anger are those who intentionally oppose the teachings of Islam. Those who go astray are those who intentionally take a path other than Islam".) This rendition was chosen by the translators in order to, on the one hand, propagate Islam as the path of truth and, on the other, avoid explicitly mentioning other religions, especially Judaism and Christianity, as it might give readers a negative impression of them. Thus, through their specific translation choices here, the translators aimed to support the idea of inter-religious tolerance in Indonesia while simultaneously promoting the preeminence of the Islamic faith.

The translators also had to tackle verses dealing with *jihād*, which is an important issue in Indonesia. Their aim here was to avoid interpretations of *jihād* that are associated with radicalism and terrorism. This can be seen in their translation of Q 3:142, *am ḥasibtum an tadkhulū l-jannah wa-lammā yaʿlam Allāh alladhīna jāhadū fīkum wa yaʿlam al-ṣābirūn* ("Or did you reckon that you would enter the Garden, when God did not yet know which of you strive and which are steadfast?") as *Naha aranjeun nyangka bakal asup ka sawarga padahal can ébréh pikeun Allah (saha) jalma-jalma anu jihad di antara aranjeun, jeung (can) ébréh pikeun Allah (saha) jalma-jalma anu sabar*, or "Did you think that ye would enter Paradise whereas it is not clear yet for Allah those of you [who] do *jihād* and remain steadfast". The word *jihād* is explained in a footnote, where it is stated that it does not only refer to holy war, but also to "being charitable", "the struggle against lust" and "the fight to eradicate evil". This explanation is used to prevent the manipulation of this Qurʾanic verse by terrorist groups in Indonesia, such as Jema'ah Islamiyah, Al-Qāʿida and Jama'ah Ansharud Daulah (JAD), who have carried out many bomb attacks in Indonesia in the name of *jihād*.[100] The *Terjemahan Al-Qur'an Bahasa Sunda* project thus aims to fight Jihadism through its translation choices.

Another issue that was a subject of deliberation among the translation team was the word *khalīfah* in Q 2:30, *innī jāʿil fī al-arḍ khalīfah* ("I will create a *khalīfah* [deputy/surrogate/successor] on Earth"). The team translated the verse as *Kami dék ngajadikeun khalifah di bumi* ("I will create a *khalīfa* on Earth"), leaving the Arabic noun *khalīfah* as a loanword. They explain in a footnote that the term *khalīfa* signifies "deputy", "leader" or "ruler", but does not refer to a political system that is in contradiction with the Indonesian democratic political system of Pancasila, the national constitution or the Indonesian Republic. Clearly, they do not want readers to understand this verse as calling for a Caliphate as the only Islamic form of government.

Finally, the team members discussed Q 3:130, *lā taʾkulū l-ribā aḍʿāfan muḍāʿafan* ("do not devour usury, doubled and multiplied"), which they translated as *omat aranjeun ulah ngadahar riba kalawan lipet-lipet ganda* (eat not *riba*, doubled and multiplied), using an Arabic loanword (*riba*). The translators explain in the footnotes that what is meant by this concept is *ribā nāsiʾah* (usury in delay of payment), that is, adding monetary value to the initial amount of a loan that is deferred until the due date of the payment. According to the majority of ulama, this type of usury is forbidden (*ḥarām*), even when the amount to be repaid is not multiplied. Therefore, the verse cannot be applied to interest in banking, which does not add monetary value. The translation also makes *aḍʿāfan muḍāʿafan* – "doubled and multiplied" – a condition for the verse to apply, so that, again, interest in banking – both savings and loans – is not regarded as *ribā nāsiʾah*. This reading differs from the views of the majority of ulama, who do not consider *aḍʿāfan muḍāʿafan* part of the conditions of the prohibition of usury and therefore regard all practices of conventional banking that involve interest as forbidden.[101]

The limits of scholarship

This chapter raises at least two important questions related to the limits of scholarship. Asking these two questions is important because I, as well as other members of the translation team, faced ethical conflicts as well as conflicts of identity while working on *Terjemahan Al-Qur'an Bahasa Sunda*. The boundary between being a scholar and a member of the translation team seems blurred in this chapter. It is not clear whether I am to be regarded as a translator or researcher, subject or object, insider or outsider.

The first question is, does one have to be Sundanese in order to have the authority to translate the Qurʾan into Sundanese? This question relates to a sentiment that is often expressed by scholars, including some members of the translation team, that only Sundanese people who are regarded as authorities in their fields can translate the Qurʾan into Sundanese. I have experienced personally how authority was automatically granted to me purely on the basis of my ethnic identity. I am Sundanese. I was born in the Sundanese region in West Java and have lived there for all my life. I am able to speak and write in Sundanese.

I also believe, in Moriyama's words, that every language has a soul.[102] According to Millie, the Sundanese language, for instance, has feeling, and it is understandable that preachers choose the Sundanese language over Indonesian to speak to village people.[103] As with any language, the soul of the Sundanese language and its emotional connections can only be felt by those who understand it well. The use of markers of emphasis or phrase markers, such as *téa, mah, téh, atuh* and *deuih*, which convey no specific meaning but rather give nuance and a particular emotional flavor to a sentence, is an integral part of both formal and colloquial Sundanese.[104] There are also idiomatic expressions called *kecap panganteur*, which consist of prefixes joined with verbs that subtly modify them in a way that conveys sound, visual impressions or timing, such as *pok nyarita* (~ to say), *jol datang* (~ to come), *trét nulis* (~ to write), *am dahar* (~ to eat), *dug saré* (~ to sleep), *kuniang*

hudang (~ to wake up) and *gék diuk* (~ to sit). These idiomatic expressions touch the heart and mind of the native speaker and cannot be fully translated.[105]

However, the Sundanese language is not actually difficult to learn. There are many non-Sundanese scholars who are able to speak and write in Sundanese very well. Sierk Coolsma, a Dutch scholar and pastor of the colonial period, is a good example of this; his proficiency in Sundanese led him to produce good translations of Biblical works into Sundanese.[106] Although he was not Sundanese by birth, he came to the Sunda region where he studied the language and succeeded in mastering it. Daeng Kanduruan Ardiwinata (1866–1947) is another non-native speaking scholar, of Makassar descent, who was a proficient poet in Sundanese and is known as the author of the first Sundanese romance novel, *Baruang ka nu Ngarora* ("Poison for Youth"). Daeng Kanduruan Ardiwinata made great contributions to the promotion of Sundanese media and literature,[107] and I even think that his proficiency in written Sundanese compares favorably with that of authors who are native speakers. Given these and other examples of non-native linguistic expertise, I do not support the opinion that only Sundanese people have the right to translate the Qurʾan into Sundanese. Scholars should be able, and allowed, to think beyond the boundaries of ethnicity.

Second, can a member of the translation team, being an insider, neutrally and objectively review their own translation? Should translators examine their own work? These questions came to me when I wrote this chapter, since I was actively involved in all stages of the project, from the beginning to the end. However, I also have an obligation, as an academic, to write this chapter based on academic principles. Qurʾan translation is usually regarded as an object of study, as something to be analyzed by scholars. Now, I am in the position of a translator who was involved in the project and at the same time tries to analyze his own translation. As a member of the translation team, I concede that I cannot escape from ideological influences, like all the other members of the team. A scholar's identity inevitably influences the research agenda that they design. Furthermore, my role as a member of the team determined the intellectual criteria against which the validity of my scholarship was measured.[108] Therefore, the ideological choices of following Ashʿarism in theology, the Shafiʿi school in Islamic jurisprudence, the political ideology of Pancasila and the Indonesian Republic and the mainstream of traditional scholarship with regard to gender relations had an impact on the decisions I made as a translator. This was an inevitable outcome given that the direction that the translation process took was based on the agreements between the translators and the Research and Development Center for Literature, which represents the Indonesian government, controlled the operating expenses budget and had overall authority over the project.

Despite all of these factors, every member of the translation team, including myself, tried to maintain a neutral stance in order to provide objective, rational arguments for the ideological choices we had to make. My critical reflection on the translation team in this chapter is an additional way that I can express this neutrality. I believe that the ideological influences at work in our translation can be acknowledged while still adhering to rational academic principles. The translation is not the result of the translation team blindly following the ideological influence

of the Indonesian government. Instead, the interpretation of the Qur'an provided in *Terjemahan Al-Qur'an Bahasa Sunda* upholds the principle of mutual respect for different opinions that are continuously open for discussion.

Concluding remarks

Three conclusions can be drawn from the previous discussion. First, *Terjemahan Al-Qur'an Bahasa Sunda* was not a purely academic enterprise. It involved more than scholarly discussions of the most accurate and comprehensible way of translating the Qurʾan, although this was much debated between the expert groups of Qurʾanic studies and the Sundanese language, respectively. It also had to take into consideration administrative aspects and the government's wish to maintain control over the views of the Islamic majority. The project was carried out entirely under the supervision of the Research and Development Center for Literature because the budget came from that institution. However, although the Research and Development Center for Literature is part of the Ministry of Religious Affairs, the Ministry of Religious Affairs did not have the authority to interfere in the project: procedure dictated that the Ministry of Religious Affairs only received a project report from the Research and Development Center for Literature via the Research and Development Agency. However, these three institutions have the same mindset on the ideology of Pancasila and what has been called the "religious moderation program". This effectively means that all projects produced or funded by the ministry must adhere to the program, including the Sundanese and other translations of the Qurʾan. That ideology was strongly emphasized by the government to the translation team time after time. Thus, the translation team might have had freedom in terms of linguistic decisions, but this did not extend to those aspects of the text that touched on state ideology. The political influence of the government could not be avoided when the translation team discussed the substance and meaning of gender and socio-political issues in the Qurʾan.

Second, some of the views held by the Indonesian Muslim mainstream influenced the Qurʾan translation project. This can be seen in the translation of verses on theology, fiqh, gender and socio-political issues such as interfaith relations, *jihād*, the Caliphate and usury, where the translation team accorded with the mainstream of traditional Muslim scholarship in Indonesia as well as the dominant state ideology. This chapter thus has implications for translation studies in Indonesia since it highlights the importance of paying attention not only to negotiations of meaning, but also to the ideological and scholarly boundaries that define the translation.

Third, this chapter illustrates how the project of translating the Qurʾan in Indonesia is influenced by many issues, including politics. The government as the budget holder has an impact on all religious projects in Indonesia. In the case of the *Terjemahan Al-Qur'an Bahasa Sunda* project, the government had great influence on the budget, bureaucracy and, above and beyond that, on the academic environment of the university where the translation team studied, learned and worked. The translation team necessarily worked within the framework of the state ideology, which encourages the influence of mainstream Muslims.

At the end of the story of my involvement in the project, I want to clarify that my position as one of the translators meant that I ultimately had to follow the authority of the team leader. The translation team members had to submit to the direction of the team leader, who was in turn directed by the government. The team leader had full authority to determine which translations were ultimately chosen, whether by consensus or not. Individual opinions sometimes had to be abandoned under pressure from the team leader and other translators. Not all opinions could be integrated into the final product. I could not succeed in convincing the team leader and other translators to accommodate my opinion, for example, in the case of gender issues, but I respect the choices that were made, and also the necessity for making those choices given that we were on such a tight schedule.

The work conducted by the translation team is the end product of a serious endeavor, and has resulted in a translation that can be enjoyed by Sundanese readers due to its contemporary diction, style and good command of the Sundanese language. However, it must be emphasized that inevitably, as with any other Qurʾan translation, *Terjemahan Al-Qur'an Bahasa Sunda* will not be able to reveal the entirety of the Qurʾan's message. In this author's opinion, a translation of the Qurʾan cannot (and should not) stand in for the Qurʾan itself and should always be accompanied by the text of the Arabic original in order to make it complete.

Notes

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26 Annabel Teh Gallop and Ali Akbar, "The Art of the Qurʾān in Banten: Calligraphy and Illumination", *Archipel* 72 (2006), 95–156; Ervan Nurtawab, *Tafsir Al-Qur'an Nusantara Tempo Doeloe* (Jakarta: Ushul Press, 2009), 49–51.
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31 Darmawan, *Ortodoksi Tafsir*, 164.

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61 The Introduction of Chief Puslitbang Lektur dan Khazanah Keagamaan, Badan Litbang dan Diklat Kementerian Agama in *Al-Qur'an dan Terjemahnya Bahasa Bali* (Jakarta: Puslitbang Lektur dan Khazanah Keagamaan, 2017), viii.
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65 Michael Hatherell and Alistair Welsh, "Rebel with a Cause"; see also the chapter by Fadhli Lukman in this volume.

66 Dadang Darmawan, "*Updating* Terjemah Al-Qur'an: Studi Kasus Terjemah Al-Qur'an Bahasa Sunda", paper presented at *Workshop Terjemahan Al-Qur'an Bahasa Sunda*, 26–28 July 2018 at Novotel Hotel, Bandung.

67 There are some publications of Sundanese Qurʾan translations that also use the government translation into Indonesian as a reference, such as *Tarjamah Al-Qur'an Bahasa Sunda* (1974–1979) and *Al-Qur'an Miwah Tarjamahna dina Basa Sunda* (2002) which were prepared on the basis of the official Indonesian Qurʾan translation editions Mukti Ali (1974) and Saudi Arabia (1990). The same applies to Mariyah Maryati's *Al-Hikmah* (2009) and *Anugerah Al-Qur'anul-Karim* (2011), which are also based on the Saudi edition, namely the translation of the Qurʾan published by the King Fahd Complex for the Printing of the Holy Qurʾan in Medina, Saudi Arabia, in 1990.

68 *basajan. meujeuhna, sigar (sinigar) tengah, bersahaja (Ind.).* See R. Satjadibrata, *Kamus Basa Sunda* (Bandung: Kiblat, 2005), 62.

69 The colloquial language uses words such as *kami* = "we"; *tangtu*, *tinangtu* = "indeed"; *ngawengku* = "covering"; *néangan* = "to search"; and *sagala rupa* = "various". It differs from ancient versions of these words such as *kaula* = "we"; *tanwandé* = "indeed"; *ngalimpudan* = "covering"; *nyuprih* = "to search"; and *saniskara* = "various".

70 Anwar, "UIN Terjemah", 11.

71 The following Sundanese words and sentences had to be used by the translation team consistently. All Sundanese words and sentences that are listed after "instead of" are not used by the translation team, because these are the ancient words that are not used in colloquial Sundanese. There are also some Sundanese idioms in the translation that could not be found in Arabic and English. 1) *alladhīna āmanū* (*jalma-jalma anu iman* = "those who believe"); *al-muʾminūn* (*jalma-jalma mukmin* = "the believers"); *alladhīna ẓalamū* (*jalma-jalma anu dolim* = "those who transgress"); *al-ẓālimūn* (*jalma-jalma dolim* = "the transgressors"); 2) *idhā* (*nalika* = "when"); *in* (*lamun* = "if"); *law* (*saupama* = "if"); 4) *huwa/hum* (*mantenna* = "He/She [Allah/God]"; *anjeunna/aranjeunna* = "he/she/they [the believer/s]"; *manéhna/maranéhna* = "he/she/they" (instead of *maranéhanana* = "the unbeliever/s"); *naḥnu* (*Kami* = "We [Allah/God", instead of *kaula*]; *kuring* = "I [human, singular]"; *abdi sadaya* = "we [human, plural, to denote respect]"; *urang sadaya* = "we [human, plural, informal]"); 5) *qāla* (*ngadawuh* = "He [Allah/God] says" instead of *ngandika*; *nyarios* = "he/she [the believer] says"; *nyarita* = "he/she [the unbeliever] says"; *maranéhna nyarita* = "they say", instead of *nyararita*; 6) *mā fī'l-samāwāt wa'l-arḍ (naon-naon nu aya di langit jeung di bumi* = "all that is in the heavens and on earth") instead of *naon-naon nu kumelip di langit, nu nyampak di jagat* = "all that is sparkling in the heavens and visible on earth"); 7) *tajrī min taḥtihā al-anhār* (*sawarga anu curcor walungan di sahandapeunana* = "gardens beneath which rivers flow") instead of *sawarga anu patinggulidag walungan di sahandapeunana* ("gardens beneath which river rapids flow"); 8) *ʿabd yaʿbud – ʿibāda – uʿbud* (*ibadah* = "to worship") instead of *nyembah*; 9) *aqīmū* or *yuqīmūn al-ṣalāt* (*ngadegkeun salat* = "steadfast in prayer") instead of *ngalaksanakeun salat* ("doing the prayer"); 10) *nadhīr* (*naséhat* = "advice") instead of *pangwawadi*; 11) *laʿallakum taʿqilūn* (*sangkan aranjeun mikir* = "that you may think") instead of *sangkan aranjeun ngagunakeun akal* ("that you may use your mind"); 12) *ūlū al-albāb* (*jalma nu boga akal séhat* = "men of understanding") instead of *jalma nu boga akal* ("men of mind"); 13) *istahza'a-yastahzi'-istihzāʾ* (*ngaléléwé* = "throw back mockery") instead

of *ngageuhgeuykeun* (lit. "give the raspberry; joking/making fun of someone"); 14) *fa* (*mangka* = "then, so") instead of *maka*; 15) *qaulan karīma* (*cariosan nu santun* = "in terms of honor") instead of *aris*; 16) *alam tara* (*naha anjeun teu ningali* = "do you not see") (instead of *naha anjeun teu mireungeuh*); 17) *fa'al-yaf'al-fi'lan* (*kalakuan* = "behavior") (instead of *laku lampah*); 18) *aḥabba – yuḥibb – ḥubb* (*mikacinta* = "love" (instead of *mikatresna*); 19) *yuḍā'if* (*ngalipatgandakeun* = "multiply" (instead of *maparin tikel-tikel*); 20) *ya'tī bi'l-shams* (*medalkeun panon poé* = "causes the sun to rise" (instead of *meletékkeun panon poé*); 21) *ikhtalaf* (*pasalia paham* = "disagreement" (instead of *pabentar paham*); 22) *ya ayyuhā* (*hé* = "o ye") instead of *yeuh*, the vocative particle; 23) *bi'l-ḥaqq* (*bener jeung mawa bebeneran* = "true and in truth") instead of *bener*; 24) the Sundanese words and idioms such as *omat, kadé* = "beware" (instead of *poma*); *jajauheun pisan* = "needless" (instead of *hamo*); *waé* = "respecting not" (instead of *baé*); *al-qur'ān* ("Alquran") instead of *Al-Qur'an*; *ngeunaan* = "regarding" (instead of *tina hal*) etc.

72 Federspiel, *Popular*, 65.

73 Kementerian Agama RI, *Moderasi Beragama*, Badan Litbang dan Diklat Kementerian Agama RI, 2019, 10.

74 Jajang A. Rohmana, "Negara Kitab Suci: Pewacanaan Al-Qur'an di Jawa Barat", *Jurnal Kalam* 12, no. 1 (2018), 152.

75 Bryan S. Turner, "Introduction", in *The New Blackwell Companion to the Sociology of Religion*, ed. Bryan S. Turner (West Sussex: Blackwell Publishing, 2010), 10.

76 Ariel Heryanto, *Perlawanan dalam Kepatuhan* (Bandung: Mizan, 2000).

77 Khālid 'Abd al-Raḥmān al-ʿAkk, *Uṣūl al-tafsīr wa-qawāʿiduhū* (Kairo: Dār al-Nafāʾis, 1986), 137.

78 Satjadibrata, *Kamus*, 380, 396.

79 See the use of *raʾā* in Q 6:76, *baṣara* in Q 2:96 and *naẓara* in Q 9:127. Rosihon Anwar, "Beberapa Pegangan Terjemah Sundawi", paper presented at *Workshop Terjemahan Al-Qur'an Bahasa Sunda*, 26–28 July 2018 at Novotel Hotel, Bandung, 2.

80 Benjamin G. Zimmer, "*Al-ʿArabiyyah* and *Basa Sunda*: Ideologies of Translation and Interpretation among the Muslims of West Java", *Studia Islamika* 7, no. 3 (2000), 39.

81 Zimmer, *Al-ʿArabiyyah* and *Basa Sunda*, 39–40.

82 Cece Sobarna, *Preposisi Bahasa Sunda* (Bandung: Syabas Book, 2012), 2.

83 Budi Rahayu Tamsyah, *Galuring Basa Sunda* (Bandung: Pustaka Setia, 2001), 105–110.

84 Tamsyah, *Galuring*, 19.

85 Satjadibrata, *Kamus*, 40.

86 Edmund A. Anderson, "Speech Levels: The Case of Sundanese", *Pragmatics* 3, no. 2 (1993), 107–136.

87 Another example of different registers are the pronouns for objects such as mantenna (sg. "him/her"), anjeunna (sg. "him/her"), aranjeunna (pl. "them"), manéhna (sg. "him/her"), maranéhna (pl. "them"); or verbs such as *ngadawuh* = "to say" (only for God) instead of *ngandika, nyarios* = "to say" (for the believer/s); *nyarita* and *ngomong* = "to say" (the unbeliever/s).

88 Lane-Mercier, "Translating the Untranslatable", 44.

89 Feener, "Notes toward", 63.

90 Rosihon Anwar, "We Use Popular Language", interview by Jajang A Rohmana at *Workshop Terjemahan Al-Qur'an Bahasa Sunda*, 26–28 July 2018 at Novotel Hotel, Bandung.

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92 Henry Corbin, *History of Islamic Philosophy* (London and New York: Kegan Paul International in association with Islamic Publications for The Institute of Ismaili Studies, 1962), 117.

93 On the Shafiʿi school in Indonesia, see M.B. Hooker, *Indonesian Syariah: Defining a National School of Islamic Law* (Singapore: Institute of Southeast Asian Studies, 2008).

94 Wahba al-Zuhaylī, *Al-Fiqh al-Islāmī wa-adillatuh*, vol. 1 (Damascus: Dar al-Fikr, 1984), 433–434.
95 Mohammad Hashim Kamali, *Shari'ah Law: An Introduction* (Oxford: Oneworld Publications, 2008), 103.
96 Amina Wadud, *Qur'an and Woman: Rereading the Sacred Text from a Woman's Perspective* (New York and Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1999), 69–74; Asma Barlas, *"Believing Women" in Islam: Unreading Patriarchal Interpretations of the Qur'an* (Austin: University of Texas Press, 2002), 186.
97 Wadud, *Qur'an and Woman*, 76; Barlas, *Believing Women*, 188.
98 *Al-Qur'an dan Terjemahnya*, the Saudi edition 1990 (Madina: Mujammaʿ Khādim al-Ḥaramayn ash-Sharīfayn al-Malik Fahd li-Ṭibāʿat al-Muṣḥaf, 1423/2002), 6; Muhammad Thalib, *Al-Qur'an al-Karim: Tarjamah Tafsiriyah, Memahami Makna al-Qur'an Lebih Mudah dan Cepat* (Yogyakarta: Yayasan Ahlus Shuffah dan Pusat Studia Islam An-Nabawi, 2011), 2.
99 For further discussion, see Johanna Pink, "Literal Meaning or Correct '*aqida*?", 112–113.
100 Solahudin, *The Roots of Terrorism in Indonesia from Darul Islam to Jema'ah Islamiyah*, trans. Dave McRae (Sydney: University of New South Wales Press, 2013), 126.
101 M.B. Hooker, *Indonesian Islam: Social Change through Contemporary Fatāwā* (Honolulu: Asian Studies Association of Australia in association with Allen & Unwin and University of Hawai'i Press, 2003), 203–207.
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7 Contested authority in Madurese Qur'an translation

A comparative study of three versions

Masyithah Mardhatillah

The translation of the Qurʾan into Indonesian local languages

In the 1960s, the Indonesian Ministry of Religious Affairs (MoRA) published its first translation of the Qurʾan into Indonesian (*Bahasa Indonesia*), and this has since been regularly reprinted in various new editions with numerous revisions. MoRA's choice to publish a Qurʾan translation in Indonesian reflects the post-independence nation-state's interest in promoting Indonesian as a national language. This changed in 2011 when, for the first time, MoRA also started publishing translations of the Qurʾan into local Indonesian languages. The move to publish translations into local languages was the result of a program initiated by MoRA called *Penerjemahan Al-Qur'an ke Bahasa Daerah* (Translating the Qurʾan into Local Languages), which was initiated in 2011 under the management of *Pusat Litbang Lektur dan Khazanah Keagamaan, Badan Litbang dan Diklat* ("Center for Research and Development of Religious Literature and Heritage, Body of Research, Development and Training", commonly abbreviated as LKKMO). Aiming to publish at the rate of two or three works annually, MoRA officially launched Qurʾan translations into three local languages, Madurese, Bugis and Acehnese,[1] in 2018. In late 2019, Sundanese and Palembangnese translations were added to this corpus.[2] Each translation is produced over a relatively short time frame of two years, a rate of production which is indicative of how important MoRA considers Qurʾan translation to its agenda of promoting religious moderation.[3] The foreword of one of the translations explicitly sets out its aims as being to support the practice of Qurʾan teaching, enable readers to grasp the Qurʾan meaning more easily and preserve the local vernacular language.[4]

The Madurese translation of the Qurʾan published by MoRA, *Al-Qur'an dan Terjemahnya: Bahasa Madura*, is a revised version of a pre-existing translation, which had already been published in two versions, rather than being a completely new translation. The first version of this Madurese translation (titled *Al-Qur'an Tarjamah Basa Madura*) was published by the Surabaya Qurʾanic Recitation Congregation (Jama'ah Pengajian Surabaya/JPS). It was produced to fulfil a perceived need on the part of the JPS's inner congregation to be able to understand the Qurʾan more thoroughly from the local perspective.[5] A second, revised version was produced by the Institute for Qurʾanic Translation and Study (Lembaga Penerjemahan

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dan Pengkajian Al-Qur'an/LP2Q). These were followed by the third version published by MoRA. All three versions were motivated by different concerns and were undertaken by translation teams with differing qualifications, factors which influenced the translation content of each.

A comparative study of all three versions of this Madurese Qurʾan translation will not only disclose the diachronic development of this text but also shed light on the internal and external factors which influenced the changes made to the text and which distinguish one translation from the others. Internal aspects include factors such as the actual length of the translation and the use of commentary, as well as chosen diction, grammar and style. External aspects pertain to factors such as the motives of the respective translation teams, the background of the members of each translation team, local socio-cultural and temporal context and the accommodation of local wisdom through the use of speech level. This chapter aims to uncover these factors and examine to what extent they influence each other.

With this in mind, this chapter will first explore the different motives behind the three translation projects, and then examine the composition of the respective teams. It should be noted that the second and the third versions resemble each other more closely than they do the first version in some respects, such as the underlying translation agenda and the team members' background. Both of these versions aimed to improve on the preceding translation and were written by almost the same translation team. At the same time, there are many differences between the second and third versions, such as the length of translation and the content of the accompanying commentary. This chapter will analyze how these factors influenced the content of all three versions using content analysis, and then address the issue of contested authority among the various teams.

Translation objectives

Vernacular Qurʾan translation came to Madura relatively late, particularly in comparison to vernacular Qurʾan commentaries. Prior to the publication of the first edition of *Al-Qur'an Tarjamah Basa Madura* in 2006, only a few Madurese Qurʾanic commentaries had been published, for example those by Thaifur Ali Wafa (*Firdaws al-Na'īm*),[6] Mudhar Tamim (*Tafsīr Al-Qur'ān al Karīm Nūr al-Hudā*),[7] Abdul Majid Tamim Al-Pamekasany (*Tarjamat Tafsīr al-Jalālayn bi'l-Lugha al-Madūriyya*)[8] and Arifun (*Tarjamat Tafsīr al-Jalālayn li'l-tashīl al-fikrī*).[9] The lack of interest in translating the Qurʾan into Madurese before 2006 might have been due to the popularity of the official MoRA Indonesian translation of the Qurʾan (*Al-Qur'an dan Terjemahnya*) alongside the widespread fluency in Indonesian among the younger generation of Madurese. There was also an aspect of religious practice, in that the older generation tended to simply recite the Qurʾan in its original Arabic rather than reading it in translation.

Islamic boarding schools (*pesantren*) across Madura have historically tended to use Qurʾanic commentaries rather than translations, because commentaries usually contain translation as part of their wider exegesis. Concerns that the status of the Qurʾan might be degraded by translating its Arabic source text were another factor

behind the historical reluctance to translate the Qurʾan into Madurese. These are the main reasons it was only in 2006 that the JPS, which is geographically based in Surabaya, a port in Java, rather than on the island of Madura, finally launched the first complete Madurese translation of the Qurʾan.

1. The JPS version of Al-Qur'an Tarjamah Basa Madura

The JPS is an Islamic institution established in 1957 by Abdul Madjid Ellyas. As the name "Jama'ah Pengajian Surabaya" implies, it is based in Surabaya and routinely holds Islamic learning group meetings (Ind. *pengajian*) for the recitation of the Qurʾan in both Surabaya and Malang. What distinguishes it from similar religious organizations is its focus on economic improvement and social awareness, initiated under the leadership of Abdullah Sattar Madjid (1937–2010) (subsequently called Kiai Sattar), a son of the JPS's founder.[10]

The initiative to translate the Qurʾan into Madurese first came from Abdul Madjid Ellyas, the founder of the JPS.[11] However, he was unable to realize it during his lifetime, and his son, Kiai Sattar, took it over following his death. According to Indrayadi, one of the members of the translation team, when Kiai Sattar began to discuss his plan to translate the Qurʾan into Madurese in 1998 or 1999, it was possibly related to the fact that some members of the congregation came from Madura. Until today, some Madurese are migrant workers living in other areas of the country or even abroad. Thus, it makes sense to find them in Surabaya which is nearby and is only separated geographically by the Madura Strait. Unfortunately, some Madurese members of JPS did not understand the vernacular languages of Qurʾan translation used by the JPS[12] at that time, namely Javanese and Sundanese,[13] and it seemed paradoxical, he mentioned, to know that the Madurese people are deeply religious, yet no Madurese Qurʾan translation existed:

> They are good at reciting the Qurʾan, but it stopped at that level. Translating the Qurʾan into Madurese was the exclusive privilege of local Islamic scholars (*kiai*). Therefore, it came as no surprise that in the 2000s, the Madurese still had no access to a published translation of the Qurʾan in their local language.[14]

Four years later, in 2002, the translation process began. It took the form of a forum, led by Kiai Sattar twice a week following *ʿishāʾ* prayer, in which a group of chosen translators discussed how to translate a section of the Qurʾan, starting from the last part (*juzʾ*) of the Qurʾan. These meetings often lasted until midnight and sometimes resulted in the translation of no more than ten verses. In a process similar to that followed by recitation congregations, the selected Qurʾanic verses were read out, whereupon Indonesian, Sundanese and Javanese translations of them were recited successively. Kiai Sattar then explained the meaning of the verses in question and the team discussed the best way to translate them into Madurese. Indrayadi mentioned that through this process, he and the rest of the team were able to learn much from Kiai Sattar.[15]

The team made an early decision to privilege literal translations and to rely on a selection of sources as their main references. These included *Al-Qur'an dan Terjemahnya*, the official MoRA Indonesian translation of the Qurʾan; *Tafsīr al-Jalālayn;* Sundanese and Javanese translations of the Qurʾan used at JPS regular meetings; the English translations of Abdullah Yusuf Ali, as well as Abdulhaqq and Aisha Bewley; and *Pangajaran Basa Madura* ("Madurese Language Learning") by Sjamsuni.[16] The team preferred to translate the Indonesian translation of the Qurʾan to Madurese rather than translating from the original Arabic text of the Qurʾan.[17]

Another member of the translation team, Jaeli, a Madurese who grew up and now lives in Surabaya, said that Kiai Sattar used to amaze him and the rest of the team:

> He is originally from Surabaya, yet in discussion, when we tried to find an exact Madurese word when translating a verse, it was Kiai Sattar who got the idea for the right diction. It was like *ladunnī* (magic), and that was on top of his mastery of the Arabic language and Qurʾanic sciences.

Kiai Sattar also liked to motivate the team during the translation process by saying that the Qurʾan should not only be read, it should also be understood and its teachings implemented in daily life. As Jaeli asked, "How could we implement it without understanding, and how could we understand by only reading the Arabic text?"[18]

The project took four years to complete and was officially launched on 26 April 2006.[19] It was endorsed by Raden Panji Muhammad Noer, a Madurese public figure who had previously served as governor of East Java. In the preface, *Kiai* Sattar stated that it is the wish of every Muslim to have both the ability and opportunity to understand the Qurʾan's original meaning from its source text. However, because not everyone speaks Arabic well, it is necessary to make the meanings accessible in translation. He also added that vernacular translations are even more necessary in a multicultural country such as Indonesia,[20] thereby implying that the JPS were also partly motivated by a desire to help preserve the local language.

The publication of the work, according to Indrayadi, was not inspired by any commercial interest, and this is borne out by the fact that on the top right corner of the cover are printed the words "not for sale". Both he and other members of the team insist that their work was motivated solely by religious devotion. Moreover, he added, the late Kiai Sattar had stipulated that the work must permanently be freely distributed to the Madurese people, to *pesantren* based in Madura and to libraries all over the country.[21] Indrayadi then added that, following its publication, *Al-Qur'an Tarjamah Basa Madura* was received with both appreciation and criticism. The JPS team, according to him, was not discouraged by the criticism but instead proud of what they had accomplished because it could be used as a basis for subsequent attempts to make a better Madurese Qurʾan translation. Academics in both Surabaya and Jakarta were mainly supportive of the translation and suggested that it warranted further exploration. In fact, their support of the project was

such that the director of Bayt Al-Qur'an ("The House of the Qurʾan") and Istiqlal Museum in TMII (Taman Mini Indonesia Indah, meaning "Beautiful Indonesia Miniature Park"), Jakarta, decided that the volume was of enough significance that it should be displayed in the museum.[22]

The first edition of *Al-Qur'an Tarjamah Basa Madura* has a black cover embossed with golden writing, comprises 1,217 pages and reads from right to left. A second, revised edition followed thirteen years later, with minimal corrections and without any significant changes. This second edition included a certificate issued by the Indonesian *Lajnah Pentashih Mushaf Al-Qur'an* (The Committee of Qurʾanic Corpus Correction, or LPMQ),[23] dating to late 2010, and had a cover with a green background and yellow and white writing. Both have a flat background without any pictures or images, in accordance with a suggestion made by the late Muhammad Noer.[24] *Al-Qur'an Tarjamah Bhasa Madura* was primarily distributed among JPS members and is still routinely used at their weekly meetings until today.

2. The LP2Q version of Al-Qur'an Tarjamah Bhâsa Madhurâ

The JPS's initial Qurʾan translation into Madurese was only intended for internal use. However, following its publication, public enthusiasm motivated the team to target a wider readership. The former head of the Qurʾan Museum of MoRA, for example, suggested that the JPS strive to obtain a *lajnah taṣḥīḥ* certificate so that the translation could be printed more widely and would thus more broadly accessible. Moreover, some time around 2007, Indrayadi happened to run into the late Syaifuddin Miftah, his acquaintance, who served as the chairman of *Dewan Kesenian Pamekasan* ("Pamekasan Arts Council", commonly called by its acronym DKP).[25] He told Miftah about the translation considering his position at the DKP, whereupon Miftah introduced the team to Zahid, a lecturer in STAIN (Sekolah Tinggi Agama Islam Negeri/"State Islamic High School") Pamekasan (now transformed to Institut Agama Islam Negeri [IAIN] Madura/"State Islamic Institute of Madura") who specialized in Qurʾanic studies.[26] This, according to Jaeli, was JPS team's effort to get the work back to Madura, its original place, and allow Madurese, the real addressees of the work, to know, use and examine it.[27]

Together with some of his colleagues, including Mashur Abadi, another lecturer from STAIN Pamekasan, Zahid entered into informal yet intensive communication with the JPS team about their translation project.[28] Along with Zahid, the JPS team also visited local Islamic scholars (*kiai*) in Madura to introduce the work and to consult them about their plans for distributing *Al-Qur'an Tarjamah Basa Madura* in Madura, on the basis that the project would need cultural acceptance as well as scholarly justification. Some *kiai* expressed their appreciation of the translation, while others objected because in their examination of the translation, they found substantial mistakes. Eventually, an official response was issued by a group called the FMU (short for Forum Musyawarah Ulama/"Madurese Islamic Scholars Forum"), which consisted of 30 *kiai*s from four regencies in Madura. This response emphasized four main points. First, they recognized the significance

of *Al-Qur'an Tarjamah Basa Madura* as an invaluable heirloom for Indonesian Muslims. Second, they underlined the need for accurate and careful work in any translation process, including the use of authoritative references. Third, they identified many mistakes that needed revision, including incorrect word-for-word translations, missing explanations of verses, mistaken derivations, mistakes in the use of pronouns, untranslated words, typesetting errors, lack of necessary footnotes and unfamiliar diction. Fourth, in accordance with the chair of the local MUI (Majelis Ulama Indonesia/"Indonesian Ulama Council"), they did not condone any further publication of the work before the implementation of extensive revisions.[29] STAIN Pamekasan representatives, in consultation with *Pakem Maddhu*, a Madurese cultural organization,[30] likewise suggested that the work undergo revision. Although their opinion was that the translation was a valuable contribution, they argued that it contained errors in its interpretation of some verses and that its Madurese diction was awkward in places.[31]

The criticism is based on a perceived lack of professionalism rather than fundamental theological disagreement. For instance, FMU criticized the fundamental misspelling in the JPS translation of a word in Q 2:117, *qun*. According to standard and common transliteration, it should be *kun*, meaning "be!", since it is spelled in Arabic with *kāf* and not *qāf*. Besides, FMU also highlights a mistaken reference in the translation of the clause *fa-akhrajahumā* ("and he expelled the two of them"), which refers to Allah as the agent who expelled Adam and Eve (instead of Satan, as JPS claimed).[32]

The JPS team welcomed these responses and suggestions for revision, and Indrayadi told me that they were happy to know that their translation could be the basis for a revised and improved translation of the Qurʾan into Madurese. It was this openness of the JPS team to constructive criticism and the appreciation for the overall project shown by institutions such as STAIN Pamekasan and *Pakem Maddhu*, as well as the involvement of other elements in Madura such as the FMU,[33] that facilitated the subsequent process of revision of *Al-Qur'an Tarjamah Basa Madura*, the so-called *taṣḥīh*. STAIN Pamekasan served as the main actor in this process. They assembled a team tasked with conducting a program called *Lokakarya Nasional; Telaah dan Tashhih Tarjamah Al-Qur'an Berbahasa Madura* ("National Workshop; Examination and Correction of Madurese Translation of the Qurʾan). This led to the formation of a new team, whose members worked on a number of committees that were tasked with consultation and review of the existing translation (JPS version), as well as comparison of the Arabic and Madurese languages. After a couple of weeks, each division's work was then discussed in a plenary meeting, which came up with further recommendations, particularly relating to the publication schedule and the submission of an application for a *taṣḥīh* certificate from MoRA. However, instead of submitting the planned revisions to the translation itself, the plenary assembly decided to appoint a smaller team specifically dedicated to revising the whole translation, as it was felt that the original text required substantial revision. This revision team was then established in another meeting that took place at the Islamic boarding school Pondok Pesantren Al-Amien, Prenduan, Sumenep, entitled Pembentukan

Lembaga Penerjemahan dan Pengkajian Al-Qur'an/LP2Q ("The Establishment of the Institution of Qurʾanic Translation and Study"). This initial meeting of the revisions team set the project in motion by discussing a sample verse namely the *basmala*, which is the first verse of the Fātiḥa (Q 1:1): *bi'smi llāhi l-raḥmāni l-raḥīm*.[34]

This smaller team, usually called LP2Q, was chaired by Indrayadi from the JPS team, with Erie Hariyanto from STAIN Pamekasan as secretary. LP2Q supervised a specially assigned translation team, which was headed by Lailurrahman (FMU) as the chair and Zainul Hasan (STAIN Pamekasan) as the secretary. Revisions to the translation were finally completed at the beginning of September 2019, after eleven years of work.[35] The translation was published in stages during the process. The first three *ajzāʾ* of the Qurʾan translation were published in one volume in late 2011. This first volume displayed the exact same *taṣḥīḥ* certificate as was included in the second version of the JPS second edition. It was later followed by the publication of an extended version of the first volume, which contained the first six parts of the Qurʾan, and parts 7–12 in late 2019. The other volumes which cover the parts 13–18, 19–24 and 25–30, respectively,[36] were not launched until 14 April 2022.

In comparison to the first publication of the first volume (parts 1–3), the later volumes were printed in much smaller print runs: only 50 copies of the volume containing parts 7 to 12 and 75 copies for the rest. It was only the first volume that was officially launched in a grand ceremony in late 2012, while the other parts were inconspicuously launched at Karimata Radio Station and JTV Stations, both located at Pamekasan, in April 2022. However, the last volumes have ISBNs, which the first book does not. The late launching of the last parts of the series, three years after the translation was completed, according to Mahfud, one of the JPS team members who is in charge of the printing process, was due to the pandemic in addition to the printing process itself. Today, the team is still deliberating whether they will publish the entire translation in one volume. By the time the last parts were published, the title of the work had been changed from *Al-Qur'an Tarjâmah Bhâsa Madhurâ* (Madurese Translation of the Qur'an) to *Ma'na-ma'nana Al-Qur'an; Tarjâmah Bhâsa Madhurâ* (Qur'an Meaning; Madurese Translation of the Qur'an) based on Lailurrahman's suggestion.[37]

In conclusion, the motive for producing the second, or LP2Q, version of the Madurese Qurʾan translation was significantly different from that for the JPS version. The JPS team does not seem to have wondered whether translating the Qurʾan into other languages is lawful. They simply began the process in order to fulfil the needs of some members of their own congregation. Additionally, they did not hold serious discussions about appropriate methodologies for translating the Qurʾan, and, right from the start, they relied heavily on *Al-Qur'an dan Terjemahnya*, the official Indonesian MoRA translation of the Qurʾan. The LP2Q project, on the other hand, was intentionally founded amidst discussions about the controversies surrounding Qurʾan translation, both regarding its legitimacy and appropriate translation methodologies, and was based on the ambition to settle these disputes so as to produce an appropriate Madurese translation of the Qurʾan.

3. Al-Qur'an dan Terjemahnya: Bahasa Madura *of MoRA*

The project by the Ministry of Religious Affairs, *Penerjemahan Al-Qur'an ke dalam Bahasa Daerah* ("Translating the Qurʾan into Local Languages"), begun in 2011, was conceived against a different background. The motivation for this project was rooted in the Indonesian government's concerns about language politics and the belief that careful management is required to maintain peaceful coexistence of the various socio-cultural groups that make up the Indonesian people. The translation project was thus intended to both serve a religious function and play a part in preserving local languages and cultures.[38] According to Mujiburrahman, the ruling current rector of UIN Antasari, who also served as a team member of a Banjarese Qurʾan translation project, this project can be related to the government's socio-political agenda of regional autonomy and decentralization. Mujiburrahman has also compared the translation project to MoRA's previous Indonesian translation of the Qurʾan: if the Indonesian translation project was illustrative of governmental attempts to unite the country through the use of language, then the MoRA project can be related to the recognition of differences within that unity.[39]

The *Al-Qur'an dan Terjemahnya* project was organized by Puslitbang Lektur dan Khazanah Keagamaan Badang Litbang dan Diklat ("The Centre for Religious Training, Research and Development", commonly abbreviated as LKKMO) under the management of MoRA. From the beginning, LKKMO has communicated clearly that translating the Qurʾan into local languages is not a new phenomenon.[40] However, there are still very few translations into local languages, given that there are around 750 local languages in Indonesia: the Madurese translation was only MoRA's seventeenth translation of the Qurʾan into a local language.[41] In the case of the Madurese translation, the LKKMO team had originally decided to execute the project in 2013 at the same time as undertaking similar projects into the Banjar, Lampung and Karo languages.[42] However, the start of the translation process was delayed, and it was not until March 2017 that the LKKMO delegation eventually visited STAIN Pamekasan to begin working on the translation project. The ensuing product was officially launched alongside other Qurʾan translations into Acehnese and Buginese at the end of 2018, only a year later. This begs the question of why there was such a long delay between the decision to undertake the project and its actual implementation, particularly given the fact that the Madurese are the third-biggest ethnic group in Indonesia. There are two possible answers to this question: either the LKKMO were influenced by the fact that there were already two Madurese translations of the Qurʾan in existence (although the LP2Q version had not been completed at this point), or the delay was due to the large number of other translation projects they were carrying out between 2013 and 2016.

As should be clear, the context of this third edition is completely different from that of the previous two: it was initiated and funded by the government, which meant that it was executed under specific rules and conditions, which included the duration of the project, the methodology and steps of the translation process as well as government oversight of the qualifications and number of translation team members. The LKKMO schedule for the duration of the project was quite

strict: the project was to be completed within two years. The first year, 2017, was reserved for the translation process, while the second, 2018, was dedicated to editing and refining the text. The LKKMO also established five main rules regarding the methodological approach taken by the translators. First, the main reference for the translation was to be the 2010 edition of the Indonesian translation of the Qurʾan, in terms of both translation and commentary included in footnotes. Second, the Qurʾanic text (*muṣḥaf*) should be based on the 2010 standardized version of the Qurʾan officially issued by MoRA. Third, the make-up of the translation team needed to include a mixture of traditional Qurʾan scholars, academics working on the Qurʾan and Islam and experts in local language and culture. Fourth, each team member should first verbally present their translation in a local plenary session before making a submission. Fifth, before publication, the translation needed to be approved by Qurʾanic scholars and local language experts. Only after that would it be submitted to the *Lajnah Tashih* institution to gain the official certificate of *taṣḥīḥ* (examination and approval).[43] Given the short timeframe of the project, it was fortunate for STAIN Pamekasan, the main partner in this process, that they did not need to start from scratch, as some of their translation team had already worked on the LP2Q team. It was also helpful that the team had recourse to the JPS edition and the published volumes of the LP2Q edition as references. These factors certainly facilitated the smooth implementation of the translation process.

The members of the translation teams

The three Madurese Qurʾan translations discussed previously have much in common: they were all carried out by teams of translators rather than by individuals, as is often the case, and, furthermore, all of the translators were Muslims working within their own indigenous socio-cultural milieu and writing for an audience of believers. However, they differ from each other regarding both the motivation behind their production and the composition of the translation teams that worked on them. Although the two later versions are both revised editions of previous renditions of the same target text, there are still noticeable differences between them. This is especially true when it comes to the initial motive for producing the translation: the LP2Q version was initiated with the explicit aim of revising the previous translation by the JPS, while the MoRA translation was a government project that primarily aspired to providing an officially sanctioned translation of the Qurʾan, regardless of the extent to which it copied the previous two works or deviated from them.

As far as the members of the translation teams are concerned, as is clear from the discussion in the previous section, there was a significant degree of continuity. Some of the LP2Q translators had already been part of the JPS team, and the same is true for the MoRA team, which included translators who had already worked on the LP2Q project. However, no individual was involved in all three projects. Furthermore, some translators who actively participated in two projects (either the JPS and the LP2Q or the LP2Q and the MoRA projects) did not make it through to the end of the translation process, as will become clear in the following sections.

1. The JPS translation committee

The translation team for the JPS first edition comprised eighteen members, all of whom were members of the JPS, and two of whom can be classed as Madurese cultural experts.[44] However, the title page of the second edition of this work only lists thirteen persons, apparently omitting five of the original names and summarizing them as "etc." (dll, short for *dan lain-lain*). Beyond this, there are no changes to the names of those who worked on the translation in the acknowledgements, apart from some minor changes and/or updates to marginal details such as academic titles, first names, spelling and *hajj* attribution of some of the translation team members.[45] The nomenclature and academic titles cited for the authors of this translation imply that they came from various backgrounds and included doctors, professors, engineers, bachelors of law and economics, none of whom were experts in Islamic studies, although Indrayadi has told me that three of them graduated from Islamic universities and were proficient in Arabic.[46] The normal title given to an Islamic studies teacher is *ust*. (short for *ustad*), and the team responsible for the first edition of the JPS translation included three names with the title *ustad*,[47] whereas in the second, there was only one, Ustad Suwandi: the two others seem to have been relegated to the "etc." category.[48] Surprisingly, the name of Kiai Sattar is not included in either version when, in fact, he led all the translation discussions.[49]

Aside from the names of the translation team, both JPS editions contain no further information on issues such as the structure of the team, for example by specifying who served as the chief or secretary. From interviews, it is clear that Indrayadi, who joined the project right from the beginning, was responsible for taking the minutes during the translation process.[50] There were also two natives of vernacular languages other than Madurese, Aep Prapto Waluyo (Sundanese) and Tarma'in Soekarto (Javanese). In an interview, Tarma'in explained to me that he liked to suggest interpretations based on his expertise in Javanese, so that the others could consider the most appropriate Madurese translation based on these.[51] The same role was played by the Sundanese linguist, Aep Waluyo.

During the translation process, there was no outsider intervention from any state, local government or other institution. The JPS translation team participated out of personal enthusiasm for the project, and it was self-funded. This is reflected in the fact that all the translators who worked on the Madurese translation were members of the JPS. It appears that the main criteria for inclusion in the team were expertise in Madurese or other local languages and the willingness and ability to attend the translation meetings. Three members of the JPS team, however, went on to also participate in the LP2Q translation project: Indrayadi, Mahfud and Ahmad Djaeli.

2. The LP2Q translation committee

Published editions of the LP2Q version contain information on both the translation team members and the structural arrangement of the team, as agreed at the initial project meeting held at Al-Amien *pesantren* on 4 July 2008. The LP2Q team

comprised four representatives from the JPS, a number of academics from STAIN Pamekasan/IAIN Madura, a selection of local Islamic *kiai*s and representatives of the cultural organization *Pakem Maddhu*. It was led by Lailurrahman. The local government also participated through the engagement of the former vice district head of Pamekasan, Kadarisman Sastrodiwirdjo, with the team. Sastrodiwirdjo's participation ensured practical and material support from the local government, and this governmental involvement and support was enhanced by the inclusion of the late Ali Rahbini Abdul Latif, the former head of the local MUI in the team. Material support provided by the local government included the provision of a venue for the team's biweekly meetings which continued after the end of Sastrodiwirdjo's tenure until the end of the translation process.[52]

Regarding the translation process itself, it turned out that this combination of experts from various different backgrounds and fields of expertise was, to some extent, a disadvantage, as various members held strong personal views on how the translation should be carried out, and there were heated debates on everything ranging from the style of the target text to its content. This certainly slowed down the translation process. Additionally, most members were unable to attend all the meetings, either due to health reasons (some unfortunately even passed away during the course of the project), conflicts with other academic or work commitment, travel impediments (this was particularly relevant for those JPS representatives who lived some distance away) and other influencing factors.[53] However, despite these ups and downs, Lailurrahman worked passionately to lead the team until the very end of the process, and both he and Muakmam, a Madurese linguist from *Pakem Maddhu*, were present at every meeting without any absences.[54]

During the last years of the translation process, Lailurrahman asked one of his *santri* (students) to type up the draft translation prior to the team meetings. Lailurrahman could then present this draft during meetings and the rest of the team could give comments and responses. Although this meant that the translation process was quicker than it would have been if the meetings themselves had been devoted to discussing and coming up with a first draft, it did mean that he ended up having a dominant role in the translation process because during the meetings, the rest of the members – who had more expertise in Madurese, namely Muakmam and Drajid, members of *Pakem Maddhu* – tended to simply agree with the suggestion unless they encountered any conspicuous mistakes.

Last but not least, the text of the LP2Q translation was affected by another significant logistical factor: the choice to locate the project in Pamekasan. Madura has four regencies (Bangkalan, Sampang, Pamekasan and Sumenep), and ulama from all four regions actively participated in initial discussions about the translation project. However, the team that was eventually appointed mainly came from Pamekasan, and the project ran with support from the Pamekasan local government and was situated in Pamekasan. It is most likely this reason that the last parts of the translation were launched in Pamekasan rather than in other regencies of Madura or in Surabaya. As a result of the centrality of Pamekasan to the project, the Pamekasan dialect has a much stronger presence in the final version of the translation than the dialects of the other three regencies.[55]

3. The MoRA translation committee

Launched simultaneously to MoRA's Buginese and Acehnese Qurʾan translations of at the end of 2018,[56] MoRA's Madurese Qurʾan Translation was accidentally printed with information on the translation team that worked on the Acehnese Qurʾan translation, rather than the Madurese team. In fact, the text is the product of a translation team (six members, all of whom are from STAIN Pamekasan), an editorial team (five members: three from STAIN Pamekasan and two from *Pakem Maddhu*) and a general committee (three members, all of whom are from STAIN Pamekasan).[57] MoRA's choice of STAIN Pamekasan as the main partner for this project accords with its policy of cooperating with state institutions of Islamic higher education in other regions; thus, for example, the MoRA Banjarese Qurʾan translation involved a team primarily drawn from Universitas Islam Negeri Antasari in Banjarmasin, and the Acehnese teams were mainly from UIN Ar-Raniry in Banda Aceh. MoRA also decided on the qualifications required of team members. These ranged from good mastery of Arabic, a basic knowledge of Qurʾanic studies and exegesis and expertise in local language and culture to having at least a master's degree.[58] However, in the case of the Madurese translation, recruitment was also based on bureaucratic position[59] as well as practical constraints: two members with Madurese language expertise only hold undergraduate degrees, yet they were still recruited due to their rare-to-find expertise.

MoRA also set out procedural guidelines for the translation process which required the translation to be validated by the editorial team. However, it became clear from interviews with a number of persons who worked on the project that the functions of the translation team set out in these guidelines did not, in reality, entirely correspond with them. For example, MoRA guidelines required that the translation be validated by a separate team, but no one was appointed to this task and validation was undertaken by the editorial team members – who, at the beginning of process, also undertook translation.[60] In another departure from MoRA guidelines, the Madurese Qurʾan translation involved fourteen members, rather than the seven to ten stipulated by MoRA.[61]

The makeup of the translation teams was to be very different to that of the LP2Q team, which involved Islamic local figures as well as JPS representatives. On paper, there is a clear privileging of academics in the composition of the MoRA team, and there is no representation of the traditional Islamic knowledge held by *kiai*s, which implies a loss of authority and may also reflect MoRA's attempt to exert more control over the translation process. In actual fact, some – if not most – of the MoRA members involved in this translation had also worked on the LP2Q translation at some stage, and two of them remained active participants in the LP2Q team until the very end of that process. This meant that, effectively, the MoRA team could have invited the old team to work with them or to collaborate.

Furthermore, in the translation process, the MoRA team translated the Qurʾan from scratch instead of copying the published translation by LP2Q as well as JPS. Apart from the differences in translation style, principles and guidelines, this might

be related to a split in the LP2Q team, which was significantly diminished in size by the end of its work. It seems that some members who were estranged from the LP2Q team retrieved their authority through the MoRA project.

As a Ministry project, MoRA also determined other aspects of the process: budget, translation style and the main exegetical references that the team could use. Given that this project was run under much stricter rules than the two others, it makes sense that this translation was completed earlier than the LP2Q edition even though the LP2Q project had begun much earlier. The entire translation process, including initial translation, internal discussion, validation, *taṣḥīḥ* and the issuance of the *taṣḥīḥ* certificate (although the certificate is not actually included in the book), took only two years, from 2017 to 2018.[62] On the one hand, this was a demanding schedule given that the team members also had to keep up with their other commitments. On the other hand, the deadline compelled them to work harder and focus on managing the translation process as well as they could in order to complete their revisions before the project deadline.[63] This is certainly different to the situation with the LP2Q team, who were not bound to work to any specific deadline, despite the fact that they were also using local government facilities.

Translation differences

When it comes to the respective target texts, the three translation committees chose different translation styles. While the JPS and LP2Q teams aimed for a "literal translation" according to their respective understandings of this, MoRA aimed for a style that the team called "communicative translation". In the following, I will analyze the rendition of the first two *sūra*s of the Qurʾan, Al-Fātiḥa and Al-Baqara, in all three translations. These are the *sūra*s on which FMU had based their response to the original JPS translation. This selection also allows me to include material from a section of the LP2Q version which has been widely published in its entirety since it was included in the first volume, and with which the largest number of LP2Q members were involved, because many of them dropped out of the project as time went by. Furthermore, these are the two *sūra*s initially translated by the MoRA team in their plenary session, which was attended by all the members of their team, before later dividing the other *sūra*s up among smaller teams to translate individually.[64]

One of the most striking differences between the three translations relates to whether and how they give additional information. One example is Q 2:84, a verse describing a covenant made by the Israelites not to shed each other's blood. The verse reads as follows:

وَاِذْ اَخَذْنَا مِيْثَاقَكُمْ **لَا تَسْفِكُوْنَ دِمَآءَكُمْ** وَلَا تُخْرِجُوْنَ اَنْفُسَكُمْ مِّنْ دِيَارِكُمْ ثُمَّ اَقْرَرْتُمْ وَاَنْتُمْ تَشْهَدُوْنَ

We took a pledge from you, "**Do not shed another's blood** or drive one another from your homeland." You acknowledged [it] at that time and you can testify this.[65]

All three Madurese translations render the phrase *yasfikūna dimāʾakum* in almost the same way. LP2Q and MoRA translated the phrase as *magili dhara* ("shed blood"),[66] while JPS had *madhumpa'agiya dhara* ("spill blood").[67] However, the MoRA translation inserts the word *mate'e* ("to kill")[68] in brackets immediately afterwards to explain what the phrase means, while the LP2Q and JPS do not insert any additional information. This may be an example of what the MoRA team call "contextual translation":[69] translators use a word in the target language that conveys the contextual meaning of the phrase used in the source language, rather than simply providing a literal translation. Meanwhile, JPS and LP2Q seem to rely on the notion that providing the literal meaning of the phrase used in the source language already conveys the meaning of the original text.

Another example of how the three translations deem the insertion of additional explanation either necessary or unnecessary can be found in their respective translations of the word *shayʾun* (a thing) in the phrase *fa man ʿufiya lahū min akhīhi **shayʾun*** (if any remission is made by the brother of the slain) in Q 2:178:

يٰٓاَيُّهَا الَّذِيْنَ اٰمَنُوْا كُتِبَ عَلَيْكُمُ الْقِصَاصُ فِى الْقَتْلٰىۗ اَلْحُرُّ بِالْحُرِّ وَالْعَبْدُ بِالْعَبْدِ وَالْاُنْثٰى بِالْاُنْثٰىۗ **فَمَنْ عُفِيَ لَهٗ مِنْ اَخِيْهِ شَيْءٌ** فَاتِّبَاعٌۢ بِالْمَعْرُوْفِ وَاَدَاۤءٌ اِلَيْهِ بِاِحْسَانٍۗ ذٰلِكَ تَخْفِيْفٌ مِّنْ رَّبِّكُمْ وَرَحْمَةٌۗ فَمَنِ اعْتَدٰى بَعْدَ ذٰلِكَ فَلَهٗ عَذَابٌ اَلِيْمٌ

> You who believe, fair retribution is prescribed for you in cases of murder: the free man for the free man, the slave for the slave, the female for the female. **But if the culprit is pardoned by his aggrieved brother**, this shall be adhered to fairly, and the culprit shall pay what is due in a good way. This is an alleviation from your Lord and an act of mercy. If anyone exceeds these limits, grievous suffering awaits him.

The underlined phrase in question relates to a situation of a family member (a "brother") of a murder victim who pardons the killer. Both LP2Q and MoRA add details about the form of the pardon or what the word *shayʾun* (which literally means a thing) refers to rather than only translating it literally, although they both have different opinions. The MoRA translated the word to *kalaban ta'e qishash*[70] ("through invalidating the *qiṣāṣ*") implying a specific form of pardon, while the LP2Q chose the meaning *aropa'a apa bhai* ("in any form of remission"), referring to a more flexible option of pardon.[71] The JPS, on the other hand, ignored to explain the phrase as if implying that the translation is already clear and can be easily understood by translating it literally.[72]

These two examples illustrate that the three versions differ regarding the extent to which they insert additional information even though they share the common goal of providing the readers with a good understanding of the Qurʾan in their local language. It is actually almost impossible to find a passage which is rendered in exactly the same way by the three works. The divergences between them arose from factors such as consideration of readers' existing knowledge of the Arabic language or the subject being discussed in a given verse, as well as differing approaches

to the process of translation, and sometimes different understandings of what the verses mean.

In some cases, the translations do not only differ from each other, but are diametrically opposed to each other. One case in point is the rendition of the verb *tashtarū* ("you [pl.] buy") in Q 2:41:

وَاٰمِنُوْا بِمَآ اَنْزَلْتُ مُصَدِّقًا لِّمَا مَعَكُمْ وَلَا تَكُوْنُوْٓا اَوَّلَ كَافِرٍۢ بِهٖ ۖ وَلَا **تَشْتَرُوْا** بِاٰيٰتِيْ ثَمَنًا قَلِيْلًا ۖ وَّاِيَّايَ فَاتَّقُوْنِ

Believe in the message I have sent down confirming what you already possess. Do not be the first to disbelieve in it, and do not sell My messages for a small price: I am the One of whom you should be mindful.

The word *tashtarū* literally refers to the act of undertaking a commercial transaction. However, not all three translation teams have the same understanding of the word. The JPS and LP2Q teams both translate it as *melle* ("buying"), while the MoRA takes the opposite view by translating it as *juwal* ("selling"), a very different activity! In the original Arabic, the verb *tashtarū* here is used in this verse to convey the idea of degrading Allah's signs in exchange for something of minor value. The JPS and LP2Q translations both opt to describe this activity as being akin to buying something unimportant, while the MoRA rendition places a different emphasis on the idea of giving Allah's signs away in exchange for something trivial or insignificant. Essentially, however, the translations, while seemingly diametrically opposed to each other, both express the same basic concept of exchange.

Another example which illustrates such contradictions can be found in the translations of a phrase from Q 2:252:

تِلْكَ اٰيٰتُ اللّٰهِ نَتْلُوْهَا عَلَيْكَ بِالْحَقِّ ۗ وَاِنَّكَ لَمِنَ الْمُرْسَلِيْنَ ۔

These are the revelations of God which We recite to you [Muḥammad] with the truth, and you truly are one of messengers.

The word *tilka* at the beginning of this phrase is a part of an *ism ishāra* (or demonstrative pronoun in English), and is translated as "that" (*jereya*) by the JPS, which is a pronoun that is used to refer to something far away. Conversely, both LP2Q and MoRA translate it as *areya* ("this"), which refers to something nearby. This contradiction may not really affect the meaning of the phrase, but it does convey a different sense of distance between the speaker and the thing that he or she points out. For lay readers, this difference does not really matter, because what is important for them is to have a general understanding of the verse, namely, that it is indeed God who has revealed the Qurʾan to Muhammad. However, it might have significance to more expert readers, who may have more nuanced ideas about when to use a given word to translate specific terms in the source text.

In addition to those two first categories, difference can also be found in the ways that the three translations comply with the Madurese language, for example in formulating imperative sentences and the use of the passive and active voice. Q 2:48 gives us a good example of a verse containing an imperative clause:

وَاتَّقُوْا يَوْمًا لَّا تَجْزِيْ نَفْسٌ عَنْ نَّفْسٍ شَيْـًٔا وَّلَا يُقْبَلُ مِنْهَا شَفَاعَةٌ وَّلَا يُؤْخَذُ مِنْهَا عَدْلٌ وَّلَا هُمْ يُنْصَرُوْنَ

Guard yourself against a Day when no sound will stand in place of another, no intercession will be accepted for it, nor any ransom; nor will they be helped.

The phrase *wa-ittaqū* is what is known as *fi'l amr* (imperative) in Arabic grammatical terminology. The previous example is in the second person plural. LP2Q and MoRA agree in translating this as *tako'a* which means "be afraid of/fear", thereby keeping the imperative sense of the original Arabic. However, the JPS translation instead has *padha tako'* which means "you (m. pl.) are afraid", using the Madurese indicative form instead of the imperative. This has implications for how readers of the three translations would understand the meaning of this verse. LP2Q and MoRA understand the word *ittaqū* as being in the imperative and being a specific instruction to be afraid (of the Day), and hence both translate the verb as *tako'a*, which conveys the sense of an order to be afraid of a specific thing. According to this reading of the text, the instruction to "fear" is an admonition, an implicit warning to believers to avoid being among those who face eternal punishment. Meanwhile, the JPS translation uses the base form of the verb (*tako'*), which is an indicative instead of an imperative. This gives a significantly different understanding, and lay readers might well assume that the sentence does not contain an injunction to fear the coming Day, but simply provides information that the subject of the verb will feel a particular emotion. Moreover, the JPS translation invites misunderstandings because it simplified the translation of the pronoun to *ba'na* which indicates the singular form instead of *ba'na kabbhi* as the plural form that both the LP2Q and MoRA used. In fact, JPS has at the same time inserted *padha* into the sentence which indicates the plural. It is tempting to speculate that the phrase *padha tako' ba'na* contains an internal contradiction because *padha* indicates the plural while *ba'na* is a singular pronoun.

Another issue on which the three translations differ relates to the use of the active and passive voice, as will become clear from the following example which is drawn from Q 2:170:

وَاِذَا قِيْلَ لَهُمُ اتَّبِعُوْا مَآ اَنْزَلَ اللّٰهُ قَالُوْا بَلْ نَتَّبِعُ مَآ اَلْفَيْنَا عَلَيْهِ اٰبَآءَنَا ۗاَوَلَوْ كَانَ اٰبَآؤُهُمْ لَا يَعْقِلُوْنَ شَيْـًٔا وَّلَا يَهْتَدُوْنَ

But when it is said to them, "Follow the message that God has sent down", they answer, "We follow the ways of our fathers". What! Even though their fathers understood nothing, nor were they guided?

The Arabic grammatical term for the active voice used in the underlined phrase in the previous verse is *binā' ma'lūm*. Its opposite is *binā' majhūl*, or the passive voice in English grammatical terminology. In their renditions of this verse, two of the Madurese translations, the JPS and LP2Q, retained the original active voice of the Arabic sentence by translating the phrase *mā anzala llāh* as *apa/pa-apa se Allah la noronagi* ("things that Allah has revealed"), while in the MoRA text this is changed to the passive voice and translated as *se etoronagi Allah* ("what had been revealed by Allah").

This particular example reflects the courage of the MoRA team, who made the decision to part from the original structures of the Arabic grammar of the Qur'an so that they might provide a more readable translation. As in many Malay-Indonesian languages, in Madurese, passive sentences are preferred over active sentences and seem more natural to speakers. This is quite different to Arabic, which prefers the active voice. For lay readers, the MoRA translation of the sentence therefore would be more natural and easier to understand than the two others, which strictly follow the Arabic grammatical structure of the text and prioritize this over readability. However, this could expose the MoRA translators to criticism from those who understand Arabic language well, and who might deem this reversal of active and passive voice a "mistake" even though the meaning is essentially the same.

The last obvious difference among the three translations can be seen in their use of register, or speech level, which is a major aspect of Madurese language use and etiquette. Madurese distinguishes three linguistic registers that signify different levels of politeness, closeness or distance: *enjha'-iyya* (*kasar* – "rough"; low level of politeness), *enggi-enten* (*tengnga* – intermediate level of politeness) and *enggi bunten* (*alos* – "soft"; high level of politeness).[73] The use of register mainly depends on the relationship between speaker and addressee in terms of their ages, social status and social proximity. This is clear, for instance, from the three renditions of Q 1:1:

بِسْمِ ٱللَّهِ الرَّحْمَٰنِ الرَّحِيمِ

In the name of God, the Lord of Mercy, the Giver of Mercy!

In translating the phrase *bi'smi llāhi l-raḥmāni l-raḥīm*, the JPS and LP2Q team adjusted the translation of *ism* ("name") to an appropriate *alos* register: *kalaban nyebbut **asma** Allah*[74] ("by mentioning **the name** of Allah"). However, the MoRA team added the honorific suffix *epon*,[75] which is reserved for the most elevated level of politeness in Madurese, and rendered the verse as *kalabhan (nyebbhut) **asmae-pon** Allah*,[76] thereby accentuating the fact that the subject, Allah, holds the highest possible position. This signifies MoRA's concern with detail, and arguably demonstrates their agenda of improving on previous versions of the Madurese Qur'an translation and fixing any mistakes or weaknesses in these.

There is another aspect of Madurese language registers that is of significance when comparing the three translations, and this pertains to the use of different

vocabulary, depending on the social relationship between the speaker and the addressee. The use of register is one of the ways that the Madurese show respect to others, namely those with higher social status than themselves. A shift to higher register, specifically in terms of the use of verbs, only occurs when addressing someone with higher status in the second person or when talking about someone respectfully in the third person. It is not generally used when one is speaking about oneself; for those cases, the low or intermediate registers are preferred. When a Madurese talks to an older relative, for instance, the *alos* register is only used when describing actions to be undertaken by them and is not used by the speaker when speaking about themselves in the first person. Thus, for example, if a speaker wants to say "I will go home", he or she will typically use the intermediate register and say *abdina moléya* or *abdina palémanna*. However, when describing an activity undertaken by the older addressee, the speaker will usually instead use *ajunan bhubhârrâ* to say "you will go home", as this is the politest form of speech. Conversely, when someone speaks to an addressee with lower or the same social status, he or she will typically use one of the lowest-level pronouns, such as *séngko' moléya*.

A particularly interesting case of the differing use of language register concerns the following segment from Q 2:34:

وَاِذْ قُلْنَا لِلْمَلٰٓئِكَةِ اسْجُدُوْا لِاٰدَمَ فَسَجَدُوْٓا اِلَّآ اِبْلِيْسَۗ اَبٰى وَاسْتَكْبَرَۖ وَكَانَ مِنَ الْكٰفِرِيْنَ

> When We told the angels, "Bow down before Adam"; they all bowed. But not Iblis, who refused and was arrogant: he was one of disobedient.

The JPS team translated the phrase *wa-idh qulnā* ("and We told") in this verse as *ban Séngko' adhâbu*,[77] while the two other teams opted for *ban Séngko' nguca*.[78] The two translations have exactly the same meaning, but the verb *adhâbu*, used by the JPS team, belongs to the highest register, while *nguca'* belongs to either the middle or the lowest register. This reflects the JPS team's implied understanding that when the speaker is God, the use of the highest register is also valid for any verb in which He speaks in the first person, a usage that goes against the usual norms of Madurese registers in which, as outlined previously, higher registers are not normally used when speaking in the first person. For this reason, the LP2Q and MoRA teams conform to normal language use by avoiding the use of the highest register in first person verbs even when the speaker is God.

Contested authority and consecutive revision of the translation

The JPS, LP2Q and MoRA teams hold different types of authority when it comes to their respective versions of the Madurese Qurʾan translation. The JPS were the first to take the initiative to produce a complete translation and publish it, although this was for a very limited readership. In contrast, the LP2Q project received formal and cultural authority because it was established to revise and improve the work of the JPS team. Finally, the MoRA project enjoyed official authority as a

Ministry-appointed translation team that was officially assigned by the government to work on the translation. Thus, each of the three versions of this translation is invested with a specific authority that ensures its continuing significance, despite the fact that revised editions of their works might have been produced at a later date.

It is also clear that each of the three translation teams played different roles in the production and continual revision of the work. If the JPS team had never undertaken and shared their initial translation, the subsequent translation works might not have existed, or at least not so soon. The reaction of the JPS team to the plans for revision of their translation was generous: they engaged with the LP2Q team and attended some of the first meetings at Pamekasan, even though they live in Surabaya which is quite a distance from Madura. Furthermore, a number of JPS members were engaged in the LP2Q project and worked hard to complete the publication of the final volume, comprising the thirteenth to thirtieth parts of the Qurʾan. However, besides showing a will to cooperate, this also indicates an effort by the JPS to maintain their authority as the first translators of the Qurʾan into Madurese, which was underlined by the publication of a second print-run of their work in late 2019.

On the other hand, the LP2Q team stands out for its perseverance throughout an eleven-year translation process. Although it has experienced ups and downs, as is clear from the decreasing number of participating team members over time and the fact that only three individuals out of the original team have carried on to see the end of the translation process, their hard work and willingness to overcome challenges is impressive. The remaining team members demonstrated their mutual solidarity and cooperation by seeing an exhausting and challenging translation process to completion. This spirit is in line with the enthusiasm that led the team to engage in heated disputes over the best translation process during the initial meetings at the beginning of the project. The LP2Q team have also established their authority by involving recognized experts in various relevant fields, including *kiai* with personal authority among the Madurese people, and also by not excluding representatives of the JPS, thereby showing respect and appreciation for their initial initiative. This rigorous, open and inclusive approach led to recognition of the project by the local government of Pamekasan, which then provided them facilities for every meeting as well as support for the launch of the first volume. Both JPS and LP2Q have joint authority as is clear from the *taṣḥīḥ* certificate attached to both the second version of the JPS translation and the entire edition of the LP2Q translation, which mentions "Surabaya" after an explanation of what LP2Q stands for.

The main authority of the MoRA team, meanwhile, lies in its affiliation with a government institution. They first asserted this authority through their decision to begin a new translation process instead of continuing the ongoing translation efforts of the LP2Q team. In fact, some – if not most – of the MoRA team members had also worked for the LP2Q, and it is possible that some of them may have joined the MoRA team because they were critical of the work of the LP2Q. However, the MoRA team still contained two Madurese language experts from *Pakem Maddhu* who, coincidentally, were also among the few members of the LP2Q team who persevered until the end of the LP2Q translation process, in no small part because the

expertise of both is irreplaceable. In the end, the MoRA team proved their ability to finish the work by a tight deadline, which strengthened its authority.

The three teams also built authority through the selection of team members. With the JPS, the attempt to communicate this was limited to specifying in the preface to their translation that two of its team members were experts in Madurese culture, and to attributing the title *ust* to a few members of the team: the former implies mastery of the Madurese language, while the latter implies expertise in Arabic or Qurʾanic studies. The JPS could actually have presented its translation team as more authoritative. For instance, two of the team members were native speakers of Javanese and Sundanese who are familiar with vernacular Qurʾan translation into their native tongue, and their expertise could actually be deemed useful at a comparative level. However, probably because most of their academic expertise was not in fields related to either the Qurʾan or translation studies, the JPS chose not to highlight this.

In contrast, the LP2Q project, from very beginning of the translation process, made a conscious decision to engage experts from a variety of fields. It appears that, in contrast to the JPS team, they set out to combine local religious leaders, academic scholars and formal authorities, as well people with prior experience in translating the Qurʾan into Madurese. In the case of local religious leaders, it is obvious that LP2Q were attentive to the influence of personal authority on the team in which the person is involved. Therefore, on the title page of all the volumes it has published, LP2Q has accentuated its authority by ensuring that it includes titles alongside the names of the translation team in its list of contributors, ensuring that besides academic titles such as M.Ag, M.H.I. and M.Pd, titles denoting religious authority such as *kiai* and *haji* are also included.[79]

The MoRA team, on the other hand, followed the requirements set out in their general guidelines by recruiting lecturers with relevant competencies and experts in Madurese language and linguistics, as well as in Qurʾanic studies and Arabic.[80] Unlike the LP2Q team, the MoRA team excluded local religious authorities such as *kiai*s, on the basis that their qualifications were irrelevant and unnecessary according to the guidelines set by the Ministry. This could be read as being motivated by the desire to expedite the translation process and avoid the long time-consuming debates and delays over the translation process that the LP2Q team experienced. It can also, however, be read as signifying a decrease in the authority of *kiai*s in terms of their participation in central governmental programs. Although some of MoRA team members come from *kiai* circles, they were not recruited because of their cultural authority. Instead, their expertise in Qurʾanic studies, Arabic or Madurese as well as affiliation with STAIN Pamekasan were the reasons they were selected.

The progression of the translation process from JPS, to LP2Q, and then to MoRA indicates that, within the boundaries of these Qurʾan translation projects, a certain type of authority, that of those with academic expertise, is continuously perceived to be necessary, while the bearers of traditional cultural and religious authority, such as the *kiai*, have experienced a shift, or even a decrease, in prestige. Academics with expertise in Qurʾanic studies, Arabic language and linguistics, translation science and Madurese language and linguistics were regarded as necessary by all

three translation teams. Meanwhile, those with traditional cultural and religious educations were not regarded as necessary participants in the most recent project, even though the *kiai*s still fulfil the function of religious leaders and usually have a good mastery of the Islamic religious sciences.

Regarding differences in content, each consecutive translation constitutes a revision of the earlier texts, although this has not happened in a smooth and continuous sequence. There was a time lag between the first publication of JPS and the beginning of the LP2Q translation work. Conversely, the MoRA project began while the LP2Q project was still running, albeit a couple of years after the publication of the first three parts of the LP2Q Madurese Qurʾan translation. The MoRA project also differed from the LP2Q project in that it did not set out to revise the published work of LP2Q, as the LP2Q did in relation to the JPS translation.

This chronology means that differences among the three renditions are inevitable, although some elements are very similar or even identical. As a matter of fact, differences can be found not only between the three translations, but also between the parts of a single translation. This is mainly caused by two factors: first, the number of team members who were involved in the process and second, the degree of editorial intervention in the text. The first factor relates to differences in interpretation and translation style among team members, in spite of the overall consensus agreed on by each team. In a drawn-out translation process, the presence and absence of team members in meetings in which the translation is discussed will inevitably have an impact on the final text, whereas in a shorter translation process, the division of labor among the members to achieve their deadline may account for differences among the segments of the translation, as each segment is translated by a different individual. The second factor, namely the role played by editors, plays a large part in a team's ability to homogenize the results of their individual translation efforts. Out of all three projects, it was only the MoRA team that had designated editors to correct and standardize the contributions of individual translators.

One further aspect that should be underlined is that, of all three translations, the LP2Q version seems to be the one that is most concerned with details, particularly when it comes to the structure of the Arabic language used in the Qurʾan. With regard to details such as distinguishing tenses as well as singular, dual and plural nouns and prepositions, which are often more specific in Arabic than in common Madurese usage, the LP2Q version prioritizes the representation of the source text over the readability of the target text. This reflects the stated aim of the head of the LP2Q translation team that their priority was to avoid any departure from the literal text of the Qurʾan. It seems that the main priority of this translation was not to be accessible to lay readers but to ensure that every detail of the Arabic source text was replicated in the Madurese language.

The MoRA and JPS translations are less meticulous and more flexible. In some cases, the JPS text uses an unfamiliar style of Madurese, but it is one that can still be understood. The linguistic peculiarities in their text range from the use of rare words to oddities of style, such as in the way imperative sentences are formulated. The JPS version still maintains the Arabic structure to some extent, but to a lesser degree than the LP2Q text does. Conversely, the MoRA text seems to be more

concerned with the readability of the text, to the point of sometimes ignoring the structure of the source text as long as the resulting translation can be easily read and understood. Another difference relates to the Madurese dialect the translation teams used, and this can presumably be related to the area in which the project took place or to team members who brought their own dialect.

Above all, the differences in the three translations clearly indicate how their translators envisage their respective readers. If the JPS version appears to be different from the other two in some ways, this might be due to their attempt to deliver an easily comprehensible translation to their readers, some – if not most – of whom are expatriate Madurese or not Madurese at all. For instance, the phonetic rules in the JPS translation follow conventions of popular written linguistic usage, which tend to ignore the official language rules, such as the use of diacritics like *capéng* or *petpet*. The LP2Q Qur'an translation, on the other hand, seems to target readers with knowledge of Arabic, so their translation is Madurese in language yet Arabic in style. Meanwhile, the MoRA appears to try to bridge the gap between these two extremes by not totally following the Arabic style and maintaining the readability of the translation text among common readers of Madurese.

Thus, in conclusion, the history of Madurese Qur'an translation has been an ongoing process, from its beginnings with the JPS team until the translation delivered by the MoRA team, which had been recently continued by the publication of the full LP2Q version of the Madurese Qur'an translation. This has been a process that has seen a great deal of progress and continuous improvement. At the same time, the diverse aims and processes of the three translation teams have resulted in very different outputs that suit the needs and horizons of a range of readers. Readers with differing levels of proficiency in Arabic and Madurese are now able to choose which translation works best for them: which they prefer to read, study or rely on. Having said that, of the three versions, only the first edition of the LP2Q translation is easily available, and this is the one that may attract the most limited readership because of its "Arabic" flavor.

Notes

1 The Ministry has launched several translations in local languages and is working towards publishing others. Sambutan Menteri Agama Republik Indonesia, *Al-Qur'an dan Terjemahnya: Bahasa Madura* (Jakarta: Badan Litbang dan Diklat Kementrian Agama, 2018), iii. Compare to Pengantar Kepala Puslitbang Lektur, Khazanah Keagamaan dan Manajemen Organisasi Badan Litbang dan Diklat Kementrian Agama, *Al-Qur'an dan Terjemahnya: Bahasa* . . ., vii. The latter source mentions twelve Qur'an translations into local languages prior to the 2018 launch of these three. Two later works were launched last 2019, namely Rejang Lebong Bengkulu and Melayu Jambi translation. Email by Arif Syibromalisi, former LKKMO staff member, 16 March 2022.

2 WhatsApp message by Acep Aripudin, former LKKMO staff member, 31 January 2020.

3 This mainly relates to some key terms such as *jihād*, *qitāl* and *dawlah*, which require special attention due to the potential for misunderstanding or oversimplification. Pengantar Kepala Puslitbang Lektur, *Al-Qur'an dan Terjemahnya; Bahasa* . . ., viii.

4 Sambutan Menteri Agama Republik Indonesia, *Al-Qur'an dan Terjemahnya; Bahasa Madura*, iii. See Pengantar Kepala Puslitbang Lektur, *Al-Qur'an dan Terjemahnya; Bahasa* . . ., p. vii.

5 "The motivation to compile these works, in addition to fulfilling the needs of Madurese Muslims, is also to provide a guide for applying Qur'anic teachings to people's daily lives". In "Foreword", Tim Pantarjamah Jamaah Pengajian Surabaya, *Al-Qur'an Tarjamah Basa Madura* (Surabaya: Jamaah Pengajian Surabaya, 2006), i. See "Sekapur Sirih Pengasuh Jamaah Pengajian Surabaya", in Tim Pantarjamah Jamaah Pengajian Surabaya, *Al-Qur'an Tarjamah Basa Madura*, i. It argues that the ability and opportunity to understand the Qur'an in its original language are not available to everyone. Therefore, translating the Qur'an into any language that people can access – in this context, Madurese – is a must. They go on to say that such a translation would also complement existing translation works in languages such as Javanese, Sundanese, Malay and Indonesian. JPS members moreover believe that translating the Qur'an is an effort to obtain Allah's blessings through helping the government and the ulama in building the capacity of Muslims which are diverse with regard to race, ethnicity and language.
6 Moh. Azwar Hairul, "Telaah Kitab Tafsir Firdaus Al-Na'im of Thaiful Ali Wafa Al-Maduri", *Nun. Jurnal Studi Al-Qur'an dan Tafsir di Nusantara* 3, no. 2 (2017), 39–58.
7 Ahmad Zaidanil Kamil, *Dialektika Tafsir Al-Qur'an dan Budaya Madura dalam Tafsir Al-Qur'anul Karim Nurul Huda Karya Mudhar Tamim* (BA thesis, Surabaya: UIN Sunan Ampel, 2017).
8 Ummi Hannik, *Model Terjemah Tafsir Al-Qur'an Berbahasa Lokal (Analisis Terjemahan Tafsir al-Jalalain Karya Muhammad 'Arifun)* (BA thesis, Jakarta: UIN Syarif Hidayatullah, 2015).
9 Hannik, *Model Terjemah*.
10 Braman Setyoko, "Growing Congregations' Entrepreneurial Spirit; Jamaah Pengajian Surabaya", *AIM2Flourish; Global Discovery of Business for Good*, https://aim2flourish.com/innovations/growing-congregations-entrepreneurial-spirit, accessed 6 September 2019.
11 Admin, "Launching Al-Qur'an Bahasa Madura", http://darulamanta.com/artikel/launching-alquran-bahasa-madura/, accessed 6 September 2019.
12 Indrayadi, "Sumbangsih Jama'ah Pengajian Surabaya untuk Masyarakat Muslim Madura; Al-Qur'an dan Terjemah Bahasa Madura", 2008, 3.
13 Interview with Aep Prapto Waluyo, 9 September 2019. The Sundanese translation is titled *Al-Qur'an Tarjamah Bahasa Sunda AL-AMIN*, translated by K.H. Qamaruddin Shaleh, H.A.A. Dahlan and Yus Rusamsi, published by Diponegoro Bandung. Meanwhile, the Javanese translation was published around 1950 by Asy-Syifa', Semarang, and Al Huda.
14 WhatsApp message by Indrayadi, 9 September 2019.
15 Indrayadi, interview.
16 Indrayadi, "Sumbangsih Jama'ah Pengajian Surabaya", 4.
17 Mahfud, phone interview, 18 April 2022.
18 WhatsApp message by Achmad Jaeli, 4 October 2019.
19 Muhammad Ridwan, "Siang Tadi, Terjemahan Al-Qur'an Berbahasa Madura Resmi Dilaunching", www.lensaindonesia.com/2012/06/30/siang-tadi-terjemahan-al-quran-berbahasa-madura-resmi-dilaunching.html, accessed 20 September 2019.
20 "Sekapur Sirih Pengasuh Jamaah Pengajian Surabaya", in Tim Pantarjamah Jamaah Pengajian Surabaya, *Al-Qur'an Tarjamah Basa Madura*, i.
21 I myself also was given this translation for free during the process of writing this chapter.
22 Indrayadi, interview.
23 For further information about the Lajnah Institution, see Muhammad Shohib, *Kebijakan Pentashihan Mushaf Al-Qur'an di Indonesia* (Pamekasan: Lokakarya Nasional Terjemah Al-Qur'an Bahasa Madura, 2008).
24 Jaeli, interview.
25 Initially, Indrayadi knew Miftah from an association of catering business owners in which Indrayadi's wife and Miftah were both members. Phone interview with Mahfud, 18 April 2022.

26 Indrayadi, interview. Miftah's initiative to get them know each other might relate to Zahid's potential to gain access to other Qurʾan experts in Madura as well as *kiai*s in order to introduce the work and gain cultural recognition.
27 Jaeli, interview.
28 Interview with Moh Zahid, 20 November 2019.
29 "Surat Pernyataan dan Himbauan Tim Tiga Puluh terkait Revisi Terjemah Tafsir Madura", 12 April 2008.
30 *Pakem Maddhu* is an institution which is concerned with the development and preservation of Madurese language and literatures. The first word of its name refers to a special seasoning used to cook *rawon*, the traditional meat soup dish of East Java. The second word means "honey" or, according to another Madurese meaning, refers to an idiom that everything depends on Allah's authority. Interview with Muakmam, 4 October 2019.
31 Interview with Muakmam.
32 "Surat Pernyataan dan Himbauan Tim Tiga Puluh terkait Revisi Terjemah Tafsir Madura".
33 Kadarisman Sastrodiwirjo, *Makna Penting Terjemahan Al-Qur'an Berbahasa Madura dalam Rangka Pelestarian Nilai-Nilai Budaya* (Pamekasan: Lokakarya Nasiona; Telaah dan Tashih Terjemah Al-Qur'an Berbahasa Madura, 2008), 3–4.
34 Zahid, interview. Probably for this reason, they invited the chairman of *Lajnah* to deliver the keynote speech at the opening of the *loka karya*.
35 Lailurrahman, "Kronologis Penerjemahan", 5 September 2019, 6. The seven-page translation chronology, which was handwritten by Drajid, a member of *Pakem Maddhu*, and signed by Lailurrahman, mentions that even though they were very grateful to have finally accomplished their task, this does not mean that they thought their work had finished. The team were fully aware that they might have made many mistakes. Muakmam, interview.
36 WhatsApp message from Lailurrahman, 3 February 2020.
37 Mahfud, phone interview, 18 April 2022.
38 "Term of Reference (ToR) Penerjemahan Al-Qur'an ke Bahasa Daerah Puslitbang Lektur dan Khazanah Keagamaan, Badan Litbang dan Diklat Kementrian Agama Tahun Anggaran 2013" (Jakarta: Puslitbang Lektur dan Khazanah Keagamaan, Badang Litbang dan Diklat Kementrian Agama Republik Indonesia', 2013), 2. Compare to Choirul Fuad Yusuf, "Pengantar Kapuslitbang Lektur dan Khazanah Keagamaan, Badang Litbang dan Diklat Kementrian Agama Republik Indonesia", June 2015, 1–2.
39 Mujiburrahman, "Translating the Qur'an into Banjarese Language in Indonesia" (International Workshop on Merchants, Scholars and Faith: The Integrated Islamization in Nusantara, National Chengkung University, Tainan, Taiwan, 2019), 1–3.
40 An official document published by the BDRT listed six existing Qurʾan translations into local languages including Javanese, Sundanese, Acehnese, Madurese, Gorontalo, and Mandar.
41 This number does not include variants of local languages such as Sundanese with its Priangan, Banten and Cirebon dialects, which vary in terms of intonation and specific vocabularies. The same is true for the Madurese language which has at least four main dialects: Bangkalan, Sampang, Pamekasan and Sumenep. Lektur Puslitbang, "Penerjemahan Al-Qur'an ke Bahasa Daerah Oleh Puslitbang Lektur Dan Khazanah Keagamaan", n.d., accessed 20 September 2019.
42 "Term of Reference (ToR) Penerjemahan Al-Qur'an ke Bahasa Daerah Puslitbang Lektur dan Khazanah Keagamaan, Badan Litbang dan Diklat Kementrian Agama Tahun Anggaran 2013".
43 Lektur Puslitbang, "Penerjemahan Al-Qur'an ke Bahasa Daerah oleh Puslitbang Lektur dan Khazanah Keagamaan", n.d., accessed 20 September 2019.
44 Tim Pantarjamah, *Al-Qur'an Tarjamah Basa Madura* (Surabaya: Jamaah Pengajian Surabaya, 2006), iii.
45 Tim Pantarjamah, *Al-Qur'an Tarjamah Basa Madura* (Surabaya: Jamaah Pengajian Surabaya, 2018), ii.

46 Indrayadi, interview.
47 Tim Pantarjamah, *Al-Qur'an Tarjamah Basa Madura*, iii.
48 Tim Pantarjamah, *Al-Qur'an Tarjamah Basa Madura*, ii.
49 Indrayadi, interview.
50 Soekarto, interview.
51 Soekarto, interview.
52 Lailurrahman, "Kronologis Penerjemahan", 4.
53 Muakmam, interview.
54 Muakmam interview; Lailurrahman, interview, 11 November 2019.
55 Lailurrahman, interview.
56 Mulyadi, "Menag Luncurkan Alquran Terjemah Bahasa Madura", 3 February 2020, https://faktualnews.co/2018/12/13/menag-luncurkan-alquran-terjemah-bahasa-madura/112930/, accessed 15 February 2023.
57 However, in reality, those who were enlisted to serve in the committee, namely Moh. Subhan Zamzami and Syukron Affani served as translators. Meanwhile, those mentioned as editors, namely H. M. Bashri Asy'ari, Umar Bukhary and Ah. Fawaid, actually served as validators. Ah. Fawaid, interview, 17 September 2019; Umar Bukhory, interview, 17 September 2019; Syukron Affani, interview, 9 August 2019.
58 Yusuf, "Pengantar Kapuslitbang Lektur dan Khazanah Keagamaan, Badang Litbang dan Diklat Kementrian Agama Republik Indonesia".
59 Umar Bukhory, interview, 17 September 2019.
60 Fawaid, interview; Bukhory, interview.
61 This number may reflect a need to involve more people because it proved hard to find persons with good competency in Arabic and Qurʾanic studies as well as Madurese.
62 Yusuf, "Pengantar Kapuslitbang Lektur"; Syukron Affani, interview, 9 August 2019.
63 Affani, interview.
64 Affani, interview.
65 English translations are based on *The Qur'an; A New Translation* by M.A.S Abdel Haleem (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008).
66 Tim Penerjemah, *Al-Qur'an Tarjamah Bhâsa Madhurâ Juz 1, 2 & 3* (Pamekasan: Lembaga Penerjemahan dan Pengkajian Al-Qur'an [LP2Q], 2012), 24; Tim Penerjemah, *Al-Qur'an Dan Terjemahnnya Bahasa Madura*, 15.
67 Tim Pantarjamah, *Al-Qur'an Tarjamah Basa Madura*, 18.
68 Tim Penerjemah, *Al-Qur'an dan Terjemahnya Bahasa Madura*, 15.
69 Contextual translation is one of best-known principles of modern translation. According to this principle, a word or expression will not be translated in exactly the same way every time. Instead, the context will determine the exact meaning. John Ellington, "Son of Man' and Contextual Translation", in *Practical Papers of the Bible Translator* 40 no. 2 (1989), 201. It also implies that a concept taken from one cultural system cannot be unequivocally used to describe practices in other systems and that literal meanings should be interpreted in the context of an entire cultural system. See Steen Bergendoff, "Contextual Translation – Concepts and Practices among the Mekeo of Papua New Guinea", *OCEANIA* 79, no. 3 (2009), 225, which defines contextual translation as a translation form that takes into account not only the content of linguistic categories but also semantic principles underlying these frameworks.
70 Tim Penerjemah, *Al-Qur'an dan Terjemahnya Bahasa Madura*, 31.
71 Tim Penerjemah, *Al-Qur'an Tarjamah Bhâsa Madhurâ Juz 1, 2 & 3*, 53.
72 Tim Pantarjamah, *Al-Qur'an Tarjamah Basa Madura*, 37–38.
73 Tim Penyusun, *Tata Bahasa Bahasa Madura* (Surabaya: Departemen Pendidikan Nasional, Pusat Bahasa Balai Bahasa Surabaya, 2008), 3–5. The three levels are sometimes divided further into the categories of *kasar, alus, tengnga* and *biasa* by redividing *alus* into *alus tingghi* and *alus mandhap.* Alan M. Steven, "Language Levels in Madurese", *Language* 41, no. 2 (1965), 294–296; William D. Davies, *A Grammar of Madurese* (Berlin: De Gruyter, 2010), 469–471.

74 Tim Pantarjamah, *Al-Qur'an Tarjamah Basa Madura*, 2012, 2; *Al-Qur'an Tarjamah Bhâsa Madhurâ Juz 1, 2 & 3*, 2.
75 For further explanation on this suffix, see Davies, *A Grammar of Madurese*, 481.
76 Tim Penerjemah, *Al-Qur'an dan Terjemahnya Bahasa Madura*, 2.
77 Tim Penerjemah, *Al-Qur'an Tarjamah Basa Madura*, 2018, 8, 12.
78 Tim Penerjemah, *Al-Qur'an Tarjamah Bhâsa Madhurâ Juz 1, 2 & 3*, 10, 15, and Penerjemah, *Al-Qur'an dan Terjemahnya Bahasa Madura*, 7, 10.
79 *Kiai* is generally used to refer to someone with traditional mastery of religious knowledge and a good track record of community service, while *haji* refers to those who have undertaken the Hajj. Lc is the abbreviation for Licence, an undergraduate title usually indicating an undergraduate degree from Middle East universities; M.Ag for *Master Agama*, a Magister in Religious Science; M.H.I for *Master Hukum Islam*, a Magister in Islamic Law; and M.Pd for *Master Pendidika*n, a Magister in Education.
80 They also appointed two persons from the STAIN Pamekasan staff to deal with the technical and administrative aspects of the project and to facilitate meeting the project deadline. These administrative appointments were not stipulated in any Ministry guidelines but proved to be essential assets during the translation process.

Acronyms

AAIIL	Ahmadiyya Anjuman Isha'at-e-Islam Lahore (also known as Lahore Ahmadiyya Movement)
AMJ	Ahmadiyya Muslim Jama'at (often labelled as Qadiani by opposing Muslims)
ASWAJA	*Ahl al-Sunna wa'l-Jamāʿa*; acronym denoting the *dayah* community, *viz*. traditionalist Muslims, in modern Aceh
Badan Litbang dan Diklat	Penelitian dan Pengembangan dan Pendidikan dan Latihan; Department for Research and Development as well as Education and Training in the Ministry of Religious Affairs
Diktis	Direktorat Pendidikan Tinggi Islam (Directorate of Islamic Higher Education) in the Ministry of Religious Affairs
FMU	Forum Musyawarah Ulama (Madurese Islamic Scholars Forum)
FPI	Front Pembela Islam ("Defenders of Islam Front"); militant Islamic organization, outlawed in 2020
IAIN	Institut Agama Islam Negeri (State Islamic Institute)
JIB	Jong Islamieten Bond, colonial-era Islamic youth organization established in 1925
K.H.	Kiai Haji; a traditional Islamic teacher who has performed the *ḥajj*
Kanwil Depag	Kantor Wilayah Departemen Agama (District Office of the Ministry of Religious Affairs)
Kemenag RI	Kementerian Agama Republik Indonesia (Ministry of Religious Affairs of the Republic of Indonesia)
Litbang dan Diklat	see Badan Litbang dan Diklat
LKKMO	Puslitbang Lektur, Khazanah Keagamaan dan Manajemen Organisasi (Centre for Literature, Religious Heritage and Organization Management) in the Ministry of Religious Affairs, subordinate to the Badan Litbang dan Diklat
LP2Q	Lembaga Penerjemahan dan Pengkajian Al-Qur'an (Institution of Qurʾanic Translation and Study)
LPMQ	Lajnah Pentashihan Mushaf Al-Qur'an (Qur'anic Text Review Board) in the Ministry of Religious Affairs

LPTQ	Lembaga Pengembangan Tilawatil Qur'an (Organization for the Development of Qur'anic Recitation) in Semarang, Central Java
M.Ag.	Magister Agama (Master of Religious Studies)
M.H.I.	Magister Hukum Islam (Master of Islamic Law)
M.Pd.	Magister Pendidikan (Master of Education)
MMI	Majelis Mujahidin Indonesia (Indonesian Mujahidin Council), an umbrella organization of Islamist groups, founded in 2000
MoRA	Ministry of Religious Affair (Kementrian Agama Republik Indonesia)
MPRS	Majelis Permusyawaratan Rakyat Sementara (Provisional People's Consultative Assembly), name of the Indonesian parliament between 1959 and 1971
MPU	Majelis Permusyawaratan Ulama (Consultative Council of Ulama), organization of Acehnese Islamic scholars founded in 1965
MUI	Majelis Ulama Indonesia (Indonesian Ulama Council), Indonesia's highest body of Islamic scholars founded during the New Order regime's reign in 1975
Nasakom	Nationalisme, agama, komunisme (Nationalism, religion, communism), the official ideology of President Sukarno's "guided democracy" (1959–1966)
NU	Nahdlatul Ulama, see glossary
Pemprov Jabar	Pemerintah Provinsi Jawa Barat (Province Government of West Java)
PNRI	Perpustakaan Nasional Republik Indonesia (National Library of the Republic of Indonesia)
PTAIN	Pendidikan Tinggi Agama Islam Negeri (State Islamic Higher Education), see Diktis
PUSA	Persatuan Ulama Seluruh Aceh (All-Aceh Ulama organization), modernist Acehnese ulama organization founded in 1939
Puslitbang	Pusat Penelitian dan Pengembangan (Research and Development Center)
SI	Sarekat Islam (Islamic Union), colonial-era nationalist movement founded in 1911
STAIN	Sekolah Tinggi Agama Islam Negeri (State Islamic College)
TMII	Taman Mini Indonesia Indah (Beautiful Indonesia Miniature Park), Jakarta
UIN	Universitas Islam Negeri (State Islamic University)
Unpad	Universitas Padjadjaran (Padjadjaran University), in Sumedang and Bandung
YLBH	Yayasan Lembaga Bantuan Hukum Indonesia (Indonesian Legal Aid Foundation)

Glossary

Ahmadiyya messianic Islamic reform movement founded in British India by Mirza Ghulam Ahmad (1835–1908) of Qadian

***ajzāʾ* (ar.)** pl. of *juzʾ*

***ʿarsh* (ar.)** throne (attributed to God in several verses in the Qurʾan)

***asbāb al-nuzūl* (ar.)** occasions of revelation (of Qurʾanic verses); sg. *sabab al-nuzūl*

Ashʿarism a major Sunni school of theology, predominant in traditional Islamic scholarship in Indonesia, relevant to Qurʾan translation especially because of their rejection of understanding anthropomorphic attributes in the Qurʾan in a literal sense

***āthār* (ar.)** reports about statements or actions by the prophet's companions and their successors (sg. *athar*)

***āya* (ar.)** a verse in the Qurʾan; lit. "sign"

***āyāt mutashābiha* (ar.)** contested term based on Q 3:7 that is often taken to denote unclear, problematic or ambiguous Qurʾanic verses, for example, those that appear to ascribe anthropomorphic attributes to God and whose apparent meaning is in conflict with the prevailing rejection of divine anthropomorphism

***basmala* (ar.)** The formula *biʾsmi llāhi l-raḥmāni l-raḥīm* ("In the name of God, the Compassionate, the Merciful") that precedes every *sūra* save for one

Bāṭiniyya derogatory label denoting esoteric trends that favor an allegorical interpretation of the Qurʾan, particularly often attributed to Ismāʿīli Islam

***bi-lā kayfa* (ar.)** lit. "without asking how", a formula signifying unquestioning acceptance of the literal meaning of the Qurʾān, especially with regard to anthropomorphic attributes of God, without subscribing to anthropomorphism

***buku* (indon.)** a book that is printed in Latin script

***carakan* (jav.)** Javanese script

***dangding* (sund.)** Sundanese metrical verses

***daʿwa* (ar.)*/dakwah* (indon.)** the "call to Islam"; the spread of the Islamic message among less observant Muslims and non-Muslims

***dayah* (aceh.)** a traditional Islamic boarding school in Aceh

***gandul* (jav.)** a type of interlinear translation used in Javanese schools that contains semantic, grammatical and syntactical information

***haji* (indon.)** pilgrimage to Mecca (ar. *ḥajj*); someone who has performed the pilgrimage

***iʿjāz al-Qurʾān* (ar.)** the inimitability of the Qurʾan

***isrāʾīliyyāt* (ar.)** traditions containing stories of Jewish or Christian origin; the term has come to imply spuriousness

***istiftāʾ* (ar.)** requesting a fatwa

***istiwāʾ* (ar.)** noun derived from the Arabic verb *istawā* which is used in the Qurʾan in relation to God and His Throne (e.g., Q 20:5 *al-raḥmānu ʿalā l-ʿarshi stawā*) and whose meaning is heavily contested because it might be understood to assign to God a physical position on or above the throne

***jawi* (indon.)** Arabic script used to write Malay or other Southeast Asian languages

***jenggotan* (sund.)** the Sundanese style of interlinear translation

***jiha* (ar.)** direction, orientation

***jihād bi'l-qalam* (ar.)** jihad of the pen

***juzʾ* (ar.)/*juz* (indon.)** one of the 30 parts into which the Qurʾan is divided for ritual purposes

***kalām Allāh* (ar.)** God's speech

***kenduri* (aceh.)** a banquet to commemorate something or ask for blessings

khātam al-nabiyyīn the last prophet, or the seal of the prophets

***khaṭṭ* (ar.)/*khat* (indon.)** script

***kiai* (indon.)** Islamic scholar and teacher

***kitab* (indon.)** books of Islamic learning written in Arabic

***kitab kuning* (indon.)** "yellow books", used for teaching in Islamic schools and printed in Arabic script on cheap "yellow" paper

***krama* (jav.)** elevated register of Javanese

***ladunni* (indon.)** magic, divinely inspired knowledge

***madrasa* (ar./indon.)** Islamic school

***mansūkh* (ar.)** abrogated

***maulid (al-nabī)* (ar.)** the Prophet Muḥammad's birthday

***ménak* (sund.)** Sundanese elite

***mubham* (ar.)** obscure terms in the Qurʾan.

***mufassir* (ar.)** Qurʾanic exegete, author or a Qurʾanic commentary

***muḥaddath* (ar.)** a person who receives revelation

Muhammadiyah reformist Islamic mass organization in Indonesia, founded in 1912

***mujaddid* (ar.)** reformer

***muqaṭṭaʿāt* (ar.)** disjointed Arabic letters at the beginning of some *sūra*s

***muṣḥaf* (ar.)** the physical Qurʾanic text in Arabic

Mushaf Bahriyya a version of the standardized Indonesian *muṣḥaf* that facilitates memorization

Mushaf Standar Indonesia the standardized Indonesian *muṣḥaf*

Muʿtazila a rationalist trend in scholastic Islamic theology that was largely repressed in Sunni territories after the eleventh century CE

***nadoman* (sund.)** see *dangding*

Nahdlatul Ulama Indonesia's largest Islamic organization, founded in 1926 and leaning towards traditional scholarship

***nāsikh* (ar.)** abrogating

***ngoko* (jav.)** lower register of Javanese

Orde Baru New Order; name of the administration of Indonesia's second president, Suharto (1968–1998)

Pancasila the "five principles"; the official state ideology of the Republic of Indonesia

***pegon* (jav.)** a modified Arabic script used to write in Sundanese, Javanese and Madurese

***pengajian* (indon.)** (Islamic) mass teaching session

***pesantren* (indon.)** Islamic boarding school

***peusijuek* (aceh.)** a traditional initiation or blessing performed for well-being in which the performer cast spells in order to bless the recipient

***pondok pesantren* (indon.)** see *pesantren*

***pupujian* (sund.)** see *dangding*

***qunut* (indon.)** a specific kind of supplication

***al-Qur'an dan Terjemahnya* (indon.)** "The Qur'an and Its Translation"; title of the official Indonesian Qurʾan translation of MoRA

***reformasi* era** the era starting with the resignation of President Suharto in 1998, characterized by democratization and liberalization

***riwāya* (ar.)** narration or report, transmitted through a chain of transmitters

Salafism an umbrella term for reform movements that emphasize a return to the Qurʾan and Sunna as opposed to the schools of law (*madhāhib*); in Indonesia, this is largely in opposition to Ashʿarism and Shafiʿism as well as traditional religious practices and Sufism

***seuneujoh* (aceh.)** a feast that is held one week after someone is buried

Shafiʿism one of the Sunni schools of laws that is prevalent in Indonesia

***tafsīr* (ar.)** a Qurʾanic commentary, or the field of Qurʾanic exegesis in general

Tafsīr al-Jalālayn title of a concise fifteenth-century *tafsīr* written in Cairo by Jalāl al-Dīn al-Maḥallī (1389–1459) and Jalāl al-Dīn al-Suyuṭī (1445–1505) that play a central role to the teaching and writing of *tafsīr* in Indonesia

***tanzīh Allāh* (ar.)** the categorical rejection of divine anthropomorphism

***tarāwīḥ* (ar.)*/tarawieh* (indon.)** nightly prayers during Ramadan

***tarjama* (ar.)*/terjemah* (indon.)** translation

***tarjama ḥarfiyya* (ar.)** "literal" translation (indon. *terjemah harfiya*)

***tarjama maʿnawiyya* (ar.)** a reformulated or contextual translation that focusses on bringing across the meaning, rather than the structure, of the source text (indon. *terjemah maknawiya*)

***tarjama tafsīriyya* (ar.)** "exegetical" translation (indon. *terjemah tafsiriya*)

***taṣḥīh* (ar.)** review, revision and certification of correctness

***ʿulamāʾ* (ar.), *ulama* (indon.)** pl. of *ʿālim*; Islamic religious scholar

***ʿulūm al-Qurʾān* (ar.)** the "sciences of the Qurʾan"; the disciplines related to the study of the Qurʾan

***ustad* (indon.)** teacher (from ar. *ustādh*)

***waḥdat al-wujūd* (ar.)** the doctrine of the "unity of being"; monism

Wahhabism label used to denote the followers of Muḥammad b. ʿAbd al-Wahhāb (1703–1792), who preached the rejection of everything he regarded as being in conflict with *tawḥīd* (strict monotheism), including the schools of law and many practices of worship common among Muslims. He argued that his teachings were derived directly from the Qurʾan and the Sunna and distinguished strictly between believers and unbelievers, calling upon believers to fight against the latter

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Translators and publishers active in Indonesia not only had to ask whether and how to translate the Qurʾan, they also had to ask what language to translate it into, from among dozens of choices. This might appear to be a distinctive feature of the Indonesian case, at first glance, but as a matter of fact, multilingualism is extremely common; one need only think of the South Asian context that was central and in-strumental to the rise of modern Qurʾan translation, where English and Urdu are often the focus of inquiry but dozens of other languages are potentially relevant. Yet the questions raised by multilingual contexts have rarely been addressed in academic studies of Qurʾan translation. Considering the particularly diverse In-donesian context, as this volume does, might prove a useful starting point. It will help us consider questions regarding the factors that inform a translator's choice of language, such as the educational levels of the target group, the medium of the translation, the respective prestige and usefulness of the languages in question, the translator's political stance and the readers' choice of the language in which they read (or listen to) a Qurʾan translation. It will also prompt us to think about the impact of the choice of language on the style and format of a translation.

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